

Silicon Times Report

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(Since 1987)

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The Publisher, Staff & Editors

1987-1997

Florida Lotto - LottoMan v1.35

Results: 04/26/97: four of six numbers with one three number match

From the Editor's Desk...

The summer is a faint reality on the horizon, so we are or, at least should be right on top of Spring Comdex. Too true. This year, the show will emphasize MMX technology with a generous sprinkling of Pentium Plus information. There has been a great deal of "noise" made about motherboards that must be specially made to accommodate the Pentium MMX chip. this is a bunch of hogwash. If your motherboard can handle split voltages ie., 3.3 - 2.8 vdc to the CPU, then your mother board can handle the MMX chip. Does the setup look familiar? Sure does.. How about the Cyrix Chip that needs the split voltages?? How about that those motherboards will work with the MMX chip too. All you look for is the voltage regulator setup on the motherboard.

I am talking about this because a few folks have called asking about the problems they've encountered and the weird explanations they've gotten from their local gurus. Its sad to find there are "knowledgeable" folks out there trying to talk their way around through and over the MMX thing.. while clearly showing they haven't a clue. If they'd spend the same amount of energy learning about the MMX and its requirements there would be no problems.

Of Special Note:

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STReport is now ready to offer much more in the way of serving the Networks, Online Services and Internet's vast, fast growing site list and userbase. We now have our very own WEB/FTP Site, do stop by and have a look see. Since We've received numerous requests to receive STReport from a wide variety of Internet addressees, we were compelled to put together an Internet distribution/mailling list for those who wished to receive STReport on a regular basis, the file is ZIPPED, then UUENCODED. Unfortunately, we've also received a number of opinions that the UUENCODING was a real pain to deal with. You'll be pleased to know you are able to download STReport directly from our very own FTP SERVER or WEB Site. While there, be sure to join our STR AutoMailer list which allows a choice of either ASCII or Acrobat PDF.

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STReport Headline News

LATE BREAKING INDUSTRY-WIDE NEWS

Weekly Happenings in the Computer World

Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

Poll: 70% Want Junk E-Mail Regs

For all the talk of free speech online, a new survey finds that nearly 70 percent of its respondents say they want junk e-mail regulated. In a statement from San Jose, California, officials with online market research specialist World Research say they polled more than 1,000 Internet users and found not only did seven out of 10 want unsolicited electronic mail regulated, but also:

- '• 43 percent of the respondents said they hate junk e-mail.
- '• And 25 percent characterized it as at least "bothersome."

World Research President Michael Bach commented in the statement, "These results send a clear message to companies using the Internet. Those companies who send out junk e-mail promotion might be making enemies instead of customers."

The survey also found:

- '• When asked if their junk e-mail was useful, again almost 70 percent of the respondents said that junk e-mail was not useful at all.
- '• More than 66 percent of the respondents reported receiving "some" to "tons" of junk e-mail with only 12 percent saying they have received none.

Says the statement, "With e-mail accounts already overloaded, Internet users' feelings about junk e-mail could become even more negative in the future. Since organizations such as the Blue Ribbon Campaign are fighting against Internet censorship, Internet users may have a tough time getting regulations passed to stop junk e-mail."

Postal Service Considers E-Mail

The U.S. Postal Service is working on a system to allow computer users to send electronic mail that's just as official as snail mail. The Postal Service's Internet website (<http://www.usps.gov/>) explains a plan to allow people to buy official time and date postmarks so they could send certified and registered letters by e-mail. United Press International quotes postal officials as saying they are working with Cylink Corp. of Sunnyvale, California, to develop the official postmark system.

Adds UPI, "Cylink will also create a Certificate Authority so people can prove they're who they say they are when sending official documents over the Internet or other network systems. This would be especially useful for commercial transactions, such as accepting a mortgage through cyberspace." Those involved told the wire service official e-mail would have to be sent through a secure system, which could also archive the letter for future reference. That's important to show that a document existed at a specific point in time, and had not been changed since it was sent.

Besides Cylink, the postal service also is working on the new technology with Aegis Star Corp. of Palo Alto, California, UPI says. As reported earlier, the postal service also is talking with at least two companies that want to make it possible for you to log into a Web site, buy postage and then have any laser printer run it out on envelopes along with an address.

CompuServe, Time Settle Suit

An amicable resolution has been reached between CompuServe and Time Magazine in a suit concerning CompuServe's early termination of an original two-year contract. They say they also have reached a financial compromise resulting from the settlement. Reporting from CompuServe's Columbus, Ohio,

headquarters, the Reuter News Service says the terms call for Time Magazine content to be restored on the system. Also, Time's online area will include an online version of the current edition of the magazine and features and stories from Time Daily and Time Digital, two other products of the publication.

Time will continue to manage the Time Forum areas on the system, they said. "We are pleased that we have reached a mutually satisfactory agreement that allows us to further our valued relationship with Time," says Denny Matteucci, CompuServe's president of interactive services. And Time Vice President Ken Godshall commented, "Time is happy to continue its relationship with CompuServe and our readers on CompuServe."

Microsoft Accused of Piracy

Usually, it's Microsoft Corp. that is crying "piracy" in courtrooms around the world. However, this time the Redmond, Wash., software giant is the one being accused of electronic piracy in a suit that could impact much of the Internet. The complaint is being brought by Ticketmaster Corp., which alleges Microsoft's new venture into local content on its new Seattle Sidewalk Web site on the Internet illegally uses the Ticketmaster name and trademark, mainly by providing links to Ticketmaster's own Web site.

Writing for the Reuter News Service, reporter Martin Wolk says the suit, filed in U.S. District Court in Los Angeles, seeks a federal court order barring Microsoft from using the Ticketmaster name on the Seattle Sidewalk site as well as unspecified damages and fees. In its suit, Ticketmaster says, "By accessing Ticketmaster's live event information and services without Ticketmaster's approval, and by prominently offering it as a service to their users, Microsoft is feathering its own nest at Ticketmaster's expense. It is, in effect, committing electronic piracy."

Wolk says the suit was filed after the two companies broke off negotiations and Ticketmaster instead forged a deal with Microsoft rival CitySearch to provide online ticketing access and information about live events. Obviously, the suit is raising eyebrows. "This is why they call it the Web -- its a web of links all over the world," said general manager Frank Schott of Microsoft Sidewalk. "This lawsuit is actually an attack on the Web itself."

The ticketing agency also alleges:

- '• Microsoft has published "erroneous and misleading" information about the type of payment the ticketing agency accepts.
- '• Microsoft's use of the Ticketmaster name dilutes the commercial value of its own site and marketing relationships.

On this, Schott says, "It's hard for me to see how sending customers their way can be bad for them," adding Ticketmaster is the exclusive ticketing agency for many of the events listed by Seattle Sidewalk. Seattle Sidewalk was launched this month as Microsoft's first local guide to arts and entertainment, with reviews and listings of restaurants, movies, events and activities. The firm plans similar services in 10 to 15 more cities this year as part of an international rollout, betting it can win a share of advertising revenue being generated in the hotly competitive emerging market.

Says Wolk, "Listings of many events include information about Ticketmaster, such as its telephone number and hours, as well as links that take users directly to Ticketmaster's own Internet site. Ironically, Ticketmaster is

mostly owned by Paul Allen, a co-founder of Microsoft who still owns a 9 percent stake in the software company."

Xerox Sues U.S. Robotics

Xerox Corp. has filed suit against U.S. Robotics Corp., claiming patent infringement by the firm's Pilot handheld computer and separately-sold "Graffiti" software. The suit was filed Monday in U.S. District Court in Rochester, New York. The Xerox patent covers a handwriting recognition technology, known as Unistrokes, which Xerox says was invented at its Xerox Palo Alto Research Center in 1993.

According to Xerox, a vice president at Palm Computing, now a subsidiary of U.S. Robotics, had approached Xerox for information about licensing Unistrokes after reading an article about the technology. Although he was told that Xerox had a patent pending on Unistrokes, U.S. Robotics adopted it without obtaining a license, says Xerox. Xerox says the infringement was "willful and deliberate," and the firm is seeking treble damages and an injunction.

Feds Proposed Internet Bomb Law

A law to punish anyone convicted of distributing detailed bomb-making instructions to someone intent on criminal acts is being proposed by the U.S. Justice Department. "Anyone interested in manufacturing a bomb, dangerous weapons or weapon of mass destruction can easily obtain detailed instructions," the Justice Department has told Congress in a statement, not only in "publications from the so-called underground press but also manuals written for legitimate purposes, such as military, agricultural, industrial and engineering purposes.

Such information is also readily available to anyone with access to a home computer equipped with a modem." Associated Press writer Michael J. Sniffen notes the Antiterrorism Act of 1996 required the department to study the availability of bomb-making information and report back to Congress in a public statement. That report, released late yesterday, found "at least 50 publications substantially devoted to such information" available to the public in the Library of Congress. The FBI has copies of 48 different "underground publications" on bomb-making. In addition, the Justice study group said it found one site on the Internet's World Wide Web that allowed computer access to more than "110 different bomb-making texts."

The report said it is impossible to predict how much future criminals will rely on this data, but noted that bombing incidents nearly quadrupled between 1984 and 1994, adding the FBI and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms believe such instructions "will continue to play a significant role in aiding those intent upon ... terrorism and violence." Sniffen reports, "The department said a gap in federal law could be closed, without impinging on First Amendment rights to free speech, by enacting a law making it a crime to teach bomb-making or distribute bomb-making instructions with intent to further a federal crime or to knowingly give such information to someone who intends to commit a federal crime."

Swedish Teen Fined for Phone Attack

In Gothenburg, Sweden, the equivalent of \$350 fine has been levied against a Swedish teen-ager found guilty of paralyzing U.S. telephone switchboards for months, prompting a global hunt by the FBI. Not named in court, the 19-year-old -- known in the computing underground as "Demon Freaker" --

allegedly jammed Florida switchboards last year by linking them to sex lines. The Reuter News Service reports, "He had cracked the codes of a company that enables Americans to call home from abroad, allowing him to call anywhere in the United States free. Working from his bedroom at night in this western Swedish city, he made around 60,000 calls, ringing up \$250,000 of phone bills at the U.S. company's cost."

Reuters quotes court documents as saying the teen managed to transfer the telefax number of the adult magazine Hustler to his own line so that he received orders for the magazine and for sexual paraphernalia. As reported earlier, the FBI picked up the boy's trail in February 1996 when he called a U.S. emergency number with what sounded like a real case. The operator kept him on the line and investigators soon established he was calling from the west coast of Sweden. The FBI contacted Sweden's computer crime unit, which soon closed in on the youth, "who was the only Gothenburg citizen making so many U.S. calls at the time the switchboards were being disrupted," Reuters says. "Police who raided his home found a single computer and 117 floppy disks."

As noted earlier, under Swedish law, the boy could be charged only with abuse of telephone emergency services. He did not enter a plea. Gothenburg state prosecutor Gunnel Skeppholm told the wire service, "The crime of sabotage is limited to Swedish territory so I couldn't bring those charges even if I wanted to," adding sabotage carries a heavier sentence.

Online Services Settle with FTC

America Online, CompuServe and Prodigy Services have settled a government charge that supposed "free trial" offers often resulted in unexpected charges to consumers. The Reuter News Service reports that the Federal Trade Commission voted 5-0 to accept an agreement with the online services. The deal will require the companies get written authorization from consumers before the companies can tap their checking accounts electronically.

No fines were levied against the three services, but AOL must prepare a consumer education program about the use of electronic payment systems. It will be distributed through the web and in 50,000 color brochures. "When you sign up at a record club they tell you you have to cancel," David Medine, who heads the credit division of the FTC, told Reuters. "When you signed up for your free trial membership (for the on-line services) they didn't tell you you had to cancel."

Another problem, according to Reuters, was that consumers would be surprised by automatic debits of their checking accounts for unanticipated amounts of money. The companies will now have to get proper authorization to debit checking accounts. "The firms will have to provide a 10-day advance notice of differing debits to checking accounts. If you have a flat fee of \$19.95 every month you won't get notice, but if you run up higher or lower charges you will get notice," Medine said.

Ellison Putting Off Apple Bid

Oracle Corp. Chairman Larry Ellison now says he is putting off -- for now -- a bid to take over financially troubled computer maker Apple Computer Inc. In a statement from Atherton, California, Ellison said that at least for the time being, he has decided "not to pursue any transaction involving Apple Computer Inc. or to otherwise seek control of that firm." He said he has not purchased any Apple stock and is not engaged in any discussions with Apple, Apple shareholders or potential investors concerning any

transaction involving Apple.

He said he remains interested in developments at Apple and that he may well purchase stock for investment purposes or otherwise, or revisit in the future his decision regarding an acquisition or control of that firm. As reported earlier, the software tycoon has been prominently mentioned as a potential buyer of Apple, which has suffered steep losses this past year amid declining sales of its Macintosh computers. As noted, Ellison said earlier he was forming an investor group independent of Redwood City, California-based Oracle, the second-largest independent software company behind Microsoft Corp. He later said he saw Apple as a maker of network computers, simplified PCs that he strongly advocates.

The Associated Press notes the bid Ellison contemplated offering would have given current shareholders 60 percent in cash and 40 percent stock in Apple, provided they agreed to sell at the stock's current price. "Still," the wire service adds, "his plans had met with derision from industry analysts and other critics. Among other things, they contended his expertise in making database software for corporations wasn't an ideal fit with Apple's machines for creative professionals. One of his main critics was Apple chairman Gil Amelio, who would lose his job if Ellison succeeded in gaining control. The Oracle chairman had said Apple needs new management and leadership if it is to survive." AP says takeover speculation also has centered on Sun Microsystems Inc., and a billionaire Saudi Arabian prince who recently has accumulated about a 5 percent stake in Apple.

Feds OK Bell Atlantic-Nynex Deal

Bell Atlantic's proposed acquisition of Nynex will not be challenged by the U.S. Justice Department, which says it is concluding that the \$22 billion merger does not violate federal laws. Now the deal needs the Federal Communications Commission's OK. As reported earlier, the deal would create a telecommunications behemoth providing local, long distance and cellular phone service for 40 million customers in a dozen states. Its local service areas include the New York, Boston and Washington markets.

United Press International reports the Justice Department antitrust division's one-paragraph announcement says the decision was made "after thorough investigation and analysis," adding it "has decided it will not challenge the transaction, having concluded that the merger does not violate the antitrust laws." Bell Atlantic Chairman/CEO Ray Smith said the merger will "help realize the promise of the 1996 Telecom Act." That law removed many regulatory restrictions on the Bell phone companies and opened both local and long distance phone markets to new competition. Nynex, Bell Atlantic, PacTel, SBC and three other Baby Bells -- Ameritech, US West and BellSouth -- were spun off from AT&T in the landmark, court-ordered breakup in 1984.

Egghead to Buy Surplus Software

Egghead Inc. says it will acquire Surplus Software Inc. for \$31.5 million. The Spokane, Washington, computer products retailer will pay for the acquisition by issuing 5.6 million shares of common stock. Surplus Direct, based in Hood River, Oregon, direct markets "previous version" computer hardware and software. The firm operates an Internet commerce site (www.surplusdirect.com) that was ranked 6th in February 1997 by P.C. Meter, a New York research firm. Since the company's formation in 1992, annualized sales have grown from under \$1 million to \$48 million.

"This strategic agreement presents significant new opportunities for the

combined companies," says George Orban, Egghead Chairman and CEO. "This is a good fit. There are clear opportunities to build on synergies in management, product procurement, Internet commerce, marketing and retail distribution. Egghead and Surplus Software are already joint partners in Egghead Computer Surplus, a retail store that opened in Portland, Oregon, last November.

Cirrus Lays Off 15% of Workforce

Four hundred employees -- or 15 percent of the work force has been laid off by Cirrus Logic Inc. as part of a shakeup following an unexpected loss for the January-March quarter. Reporting from Cirrus' Fremont, California, headquarters, The Associated Press quotes the company, which makes microprocessor chips for graphics and sound, as saying it should make money again in the current quarter if sales live up to expectations.

AP says Cirrus will:

- Consolidate operations and move test and assembly activities overseas.
- Create a new Office of the President, which will report to CEO Michael Hackworth, who says the change will enable other executives to handle day-to-day activities and let him "look at the bigger picture," consider strategy and spend time with customers and partners.

The wire service says Cirrus lost \$51.9 million, or 79 cents a share, for its fiscal fourth quarter ended March 29. The results, which include a restructuring charge of \$21 million, compare with a loss of \$88.4 million, or \$1.38 a share, for the year-ago period.

HP Unveils New Ink-Jet Printers

Hewlett-Packard Co. has introduced a new line of color ink-jet printers targeted at home PC users. With prices starting at about \$200, the new DeskJet 670C series printers offer 600 by 600 dots-per-inch (dpi) black text printing and 600 by 300 color output. The products replace HP's current DeskJet 400 model.

"HP is bringing its renowned ink-jet printing technology to a new category of home customers," says Andrew Tallian, HP's consumer marketing manager for North America. "Priced lower than an average color TV, the HP DeskJet 670C series of printers are within the budget of almost any family that wants to add creative benefits of color printing to a home computer." Information about HP and its products can also be found on the web at www.hp.com.

Dell to Enter Workstation Market

Dell Computer Corp. plans to enter the workstation market later this year with systems based on Microsoft's Windows NT operating system and Intel's Pentium II processor. Dell, the world's leading direct marketer of computer systems, says it has created an internal organization to focus on workstation opportunities. Workstations -- high-powered desktop computers -- handle specialized tasks such as financial analysis, computer-aided design or software development.

"The continued progression to open standards and the growing momentum of industry-standard Intel processor technology and Windows NT make the timing right for Dell's entry into the workstation market," says Michael S. Dell, the computer maker's chairman and CEO. "Dell is a leader in delivering products with Windows NT and a longtime champion of open standards, which

reduce the total cost and complexity of computing. With more than 90 percent of our sales going to corporations, we are uniquely positioned to understand their requirements. Their feedback makes it clear that a Dell entry should be very well accepted."

Mag Says Web Population Doubled

A survey by Business Week magazine finds the number of World Wide Web users has almost doubled from a year ago. According to the Reuter News Service, the poll of 1,000 U.S. households, conducted by Baruch College and Harris Poll, found:

- '• 21 percent of adults, or 40 million people, cruise the Internet's World Wide Web, up from 21.5 million a year ago.
- '• About 12 percent use commercial online services, such as CompuServe or America Online, the study said.
- '• The cyberspace gender gap was steadily shrinking. Women now make up more than two-fifths of Internet users, a group that includes World Wide Web and other online users, up from 23 percent in September 1995.
- '• The largest age group of Internet users are people in their 40s, who make up about a quarter of the cyberspace population. Almost half of Internet users are 40 or older.
- '• More than two-fifths coming from households with incomes of more than \$50,000 a year. Only 18 percent of Internet users make \$25,000 or less each year.

The study also found that the Internet is dominated by whites, who make up 85 percent of Internet users, Reuters says.

William Cohen Warns of Internet

Defense Secretary William Cohen says the threat of terrorism is likely to increase in the U.S. as the Internet provides easier access to information on making bombs. Speaking in Athens, Georgia, at a forum on terrorism held at the University of Georgia, Cohen said, "It's a real threat. We are going to see information continue to spread as to how these weapons can be manufactured in a homegrown laboratory." Also at the forum, the Reuter News Service quotes former Sen. Sam Nunn, a Georgia Democrat who was chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, as saying, "We are in a period of the Internet transmitting knowledge to people all over the globe in how to make weapons of mass destruction. We are in a new era and it's time for us to recognize it."

Labor Dept. Scooped by Web Site

U.S. Labor Department officials say they don't know how a government-backed World Wide Web site was able to give Net surfers an advance peek yesterday at revisions to the Labor Department's weekly jobless claims economic report. The data is normally released on Thursday mornings and loaded onto the web site on Fridays, but this week's report was online yesterday at the Information Technology Support Center web site (www.itsc.state.md.us), according to the Reuter News Service.

(Initial claims for the week ending April 19 were revised to a seasonally adjusted 319,000 claims from 324,000 reported last week, the Labor Department reported after the leak was discovered. Continued Claims for the week ending April 12 were revised to 2,271,000 from the previously reported 2,290,000.) Labor Department spokesman Tom Edwards told the wire service officials in the department are "still looking into" how the information

landed on the web.

The ITSC is a joint venture sponsored by several U.S. government offices including the Labor Department, the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation, the University of Maryland, Lockheed Martin Corporation and Mitretek Systems. The project's goal is to provide automated information and technology to the 53 State Employment Security Agencies.

Texan Saves Woman Via Internet

Twelve-year-old Texan Sean Redden recently used the Internet to save the life of an asthmatic woman who was suffocating half a world away. Playing online in an Internet chat room earlier this month, the Denton, Texas, lad at first wasn't sure whether the "sob" and "pain" messages flashing onto his screen were real or part of the game. Fortunately, he decided to take the messages seriously and -- with help from his mom, sheriff's dispatchers, international telephone operators and Finnish paramedics -- rescued Tarja Laitinen from a locked computer lab in Kerava, Finland.

The Associated Press says the episode occurred April 14, but it wasn't until this week that Interpol verified it was not a hoax, that Laitinen, a 20-year-old business student, had been in real trouble. The international police agency Teletype message routed to local sheriff's dispatchers said, "Ms. Laitinen got the medical attention she badly needed that night and is now doing well. It was real." Young Redden told reporters he was in a fantasy-oriented online chat room called Glen Shadows Tavern, when a new character entered the room and said, "Hello, help me." While other users took it to be more make-believe, Sean typed, "What's the matter?"

Says AP, "The woman responded that she was an asthmatic college student in Finland who had stayed late in the computer lab, gotten locked in and was having trouble breathing. She said she was getting worse by the minute and gave details including her name and address." Sean said later, "It was too real to be a joke," so he summoned his mother, Sharon Redden, who called police. Via sheriff's dispatchers Debbie Strachan and Amy Schmidt, a Texas phone operator was enlisted in the rescue effort and began calling Finnish operators. Eventually, an ambulance crew was sent to the Finnish school, but it still took some time for rescuers to find Laitinen, with help from the messages she still was sending online to Sean.

Says Sean, "She started saying, 'It's getting worse,' and our modem is, like, the slowest in the universe. I was pretty nervous." At last, Laitinen sent a message saying she could hear the paramedics in the hallway. Then her sign-on disappeared. "For days," AP reports, "none of her Texas rescuers knew what had become of her or even whether the exchange was true. Finally, the word came from Interpol." Sheriff Weldon Lucas told reporters, "By keeping on the computer with her, doing what was necessary, (Sean) did save someone's life. Everyone at first thought it was a hoax, even him. It turned out great."

U.S., Europe Protest Net Names

A day before the signing ceremony, both the U.S. and the European Union have complained they weren't adequately consulted on plans for a new system of names for the Internet. Reporting from Geneva, Associated Press writer Alexander G. Higgins quotes unidentified sources as saying U.S. officials have scolded U.N. organizations for setting up a meeting on the agreement without getting authorization first from member governments.

Also, says Higgins, a EU official complained that European interests were

ignored in the agreement, even though the EU in general supports the need to improve the system for assigning names to "sites" on the World Wide Web. "While the signing is expected to go ahead with the support of many telecommunications companies and Internet user organizations," says AP, "the last-minute opposition underscored the lack of unanimity and the desire by governments to exercise some control of the Internet."

The wire service says about 50 people -- among them, representatives of corporations and Internet user groups as well as a handful of governments -- have been meeting in Geneva since Tuesday to discuss the accord, adding, "The plan is to open up the registration system, currently controlled by one corporation, the Virginia-based Network Solutions Inc., under contract with the U.S. National Science Foundation."

At the heart of the issue is the need to satisfy the growing demand around the world for easily remembered names for the Internet, such as "www.ibm.com" or "www.microsoft.com." Says Higgins, "In the months of negotiations leading up to the meeting, a collection of Internet users, companies and other interested parties agreed on a list of seven new 'extensions' for the names. They are .firm for businesses, .store for companies selling products, .web for sites emphasizing the World Wide Web, .arts for cultural sites, .info for information services, .nom for individuals and .rec for recreational activities."

But a U.S. official told the meeting Washington needs more time to consider the draft plan before announcing a position on it. AP quotes the European edition of the Wall Street Journal as reporting the State Department had instructed the U.S. Mission in Geneva to express its concerns that the U.N. International Telecommunication Union had set up the signing "without authorization of the member governments."

Online Banking to Boom This Year

Analysts project the number of online banking households in the U.S. will grow 78 percent this year. Researchers at Jupiter Communications in New York told the Reuter News Service they project more than 4.5 million online banking households by the end of 1997, compared with only 2.5 million at the end of last year. And the number is expected to climb to 18 million households by the end of 2002. Scott Smith, director of Jupiter's digital commerce group, told the wire service many banks are turning to the Internet's World Wide Web of computer networks as the primary platform for online banking.

Jupiter projects:

- '• The growth rate in new online banking households slows to 66 percent in 1998 and 34 percent in 1999.
- '• The market will become saturated by 1999 as the pool of potential customers is mostly acquired and major players become established in the industry.
- '• Monthly prices will gradually fall over the next six years, as an increasing number of banks offer free online banking.
- '• As a result, cost savings rather than revenue generation will become the focus of the online banking market.
- '• The cost of an online banking transaction will be less than one percent of the total cost of servicing a customer in a branch.

Reuters notes Chase Manhattan Corp., the largest U.S. bank and biggest in New York metropolitan area, announced free online banking this week, which rival Citicorp has had it for some time.

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A T T E N T I O N-A T T E N T I O N-A T T E N T I O N

Shareware Treasure Chest STR Feature

"The Latest & Greatest"

Shareware Treasure Chest

By Lloyd E. Pulley
lepulley@streport.com

| Name/Version | Release Date | Size | Price |
|------------------------|--------------|--------|----------|
| Downtown 32-bit beta 4 | 4/26/97 | 1.90mb | Freeware |

Downtown is a comprehensive 'push' software product which automatically delivers the latest information from your favorite web sites right to your desktop. How it works: You create channels on the Downtown channel bar (similar to a toolbar) for each of your preferred sites. Downtown continually searches your channels' sites for new content, automatically downloads it, and notifies you when new content is available. When you are ready to view it, you just click the item of interest and instantly access the associated web pages.

Home Page Site - <http://www.incommon.com/>

| Name/Version | Release Date | Size | Price |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|-------|----------|
| Crescendo 32-bit 3.0 beta 2 Plug-In | 4/26/97 | .47mb | Freeware |

New beta version of Netscape Navigator browsers that lets you listen to background music as you browse a web site. Of course, that depends on the site actually designing background music into its pages.

Home Page Site - <http://www.liveupdate.com/crescendo.html>

| Name/Version | Release Date | Size | Price |
|----------------------------|--------------|-------|----------|
| MultiNet 32-bit 1.5 beta 5 | 4/26/97 | 1.0mb | Freeware |

MultiNet is a small program that sit on your Win95 System Tray (Beside the taskbar clock) and background check your mail account for new messages, detect your 'Net connection and then launch your favorites apps or adjust your PC clock using a Time Server! It also run as an Identification Server(IdentD). It can even Copy your IP Address to clipboard at connect.

Home Page Site - <http://www.geocities.com/SiliconValley/Lakes/4937/>

| Name/Version | Release Date | Size | Price |
|-----------------|--------------|-------|----------|
| SuperDIR 95 7.0 | 4/28/97 | 500kb | Freeware |

There are many of us who still prefer to use the command line to accomplish many day-to-day file management tasks. SuperDIR is an advanced but simple to use directory lister. It completely replaces the familiar DIR command issued at the DOS prompt. It has all the features of the DIR command plus a huge array of other useful features.

Home Page Site - <http://www.ozemail.com.au/~sdir/>

| Name/Version | Release Date | Size | Price |
|------------------|--------------|---------|-------------|
| Laser Blocks 2.2 | 5/01/97 | 1,172kb | Demo \$9.95 |

A Tetris type game. Laser Blocks features an endless supply of blocks with pipes embedded in them that fall from the sky. Line up three or more pipe sections and a laser removes them, remove all the sections of pipe from a given block and it disappears.

Home Page Site - <http://www.algonet.se/~nicetime/>

| Name/Version | Release Date | Size | Price |
|-------------------|--------------|--------|----------------|
| VidFun 16-bit 3.1 | 4/26/97 | 1.30mb | Shareware \$35 |

VidFun is an easy-to-use, Multimedia viewer/slideshow/screensaver and image utility. It supports popular video files (MPEG, AVI, MOV, FLC/FLI), audio files (MIDI, WAV, CD music) and many graphics files (JPEG, BMP/DIB, CMP, KQP/PIC, MAC, PhotoCD, PICT, PCX, PNG, PSD, RAS, TGA, TIF, WPG), and Multipage DCX/TIF fax files. It works with Windows 95; supports Drag & Drop; and can integrate as helper app for Web browsers (e.g., Netscape). It features Instant Slideshows for multi-track, Multimedia slideshows (or screensavers) with overlapped graphics, video and audio with 30+ effects, variable loops, speed, volume, size, position, background, delays (or presentations controls) via 'spreadsheet' editor. Image processing includes gamma, sharpen, smooth, histogram analysis and enhancement, posterize, mosaic, color reduction, dithering, variable emboss, combine bitmaps, RGB/CMYK/HSV/HLS color spaces... Plus, color prints (w/ choice of dithering), format conversions (batch), TWAIN scans/grabs, edits (cut, paste, .01 deg. rotate, flip, crop, resize)...more.

Home Page Site - <http://users.aol.com/lgozum/vidfun.htm>

| Name/Version | Release Date | Size | Price |
|---|--------------|-------|----------|
| Notify CD Player 32-bit 1.20 Official Release | 4/26/97 | .04mb | Freeware |

CDPlayer that resides in the Notify area of the taskbar in Windows 95 or Windows NT4.0. It has some cool features such as: Features right-click menu with all common CD actions and a Tracks menu including the names of all tracks on the current CD, Fast left-click operation. One click to get the next track/play, two clicks to pause/resume, three clicks to get previous track, and compatible with CDPLAYER.EXE included in Windows 95 and Windows NT 4.0. Can replace CDPLAYER.EXE to feature autoplay etc.

Home Page Site - <http://www.artech.se/~mlt/software/index.html>

| Name/Version | Release Date | Size | Price |
|-------------------|--------------|---------|-----------------|
| Fallout for Win95 | 4/26/97 | 20.00mb | Commercial Demo |

Note: A version in smaller downloadable parts is also available

Set in the aftermath of a world-wide nuclear war, Fallout will challenge you to survive in an unknown and dangerous world. You will take the role of a Vault-dweller, a person who has grown up in a secluded, underground survival Vault. Circumstances arise that force you to go Outside -- to a strange world 80 years after the end of the modern civilization. A world of mutants, radiation, gangs and violence.

Combat in Fallout is tactical turn-based. You can take as much time as you need to make decisions. Choose from different types of attacks, with a variety of weapons and attack skills. Weapons include: shotguns, flamethrowers, chainguns, rocket launchers, sledgehammers, brass knuckles and more.

Home Page Site - <http://www.interplay.com/fallout/index.html>

| Name/Version | Release Date | Size | Price |
|-----------------------------|--------------|--------|----------------|
| NetAttache Pro 32-bit 2.50a | 4/26/97 | 1.20mb | Shareware \$50 |

NetAttach^' is a second-generation Web agent that responds to the users' need to filter data. In a nutshell, NetAttach^' Searches, Filters and Delivers. It can: be set to run on demand or on a specific schedule, filter the data, providing only new information (differences), spider mode can retrieve all or a portion of a Web site for later off-line perusal, automate searches of Web search engines, archive Web data, and is a smart agent, capable of searching for pages which match Boolean logic queries " New features in 2.0 are Easy to set up agent settings, Yahoo! At your fingertips , Flexible timer for unattended operation Powerful, flexible spider to retrieve multiple page levels, Up to 20 simultaneous retrievals, Advanced differences filter to show actual difference Full text search capability, retrieves relevant information Advanced architecture offers compact and efficient data storage Data compression technology built-in .

Home Page Site - <http://www.tympani.com/>

| Name/Version | Release Date | Size | Price |
|-----------------------|--------------|--------|----------------|
| Set Me Up 32-bit 3.02 | 4/27/97 | 2.10mb | Shareware \$24 |

System configuration the easy way - get the most from your PC with over 50 enhancements and configuration options! Customize advanced and hidden Windows settings, change the look and behavior of the desktop, apply several security and logon enhancements. This release features new explorer-style interface and includes system configuration recovery tool.

Home Page Site - <http://192.41.26.180/>

| Name/Version | Release Date | Size | Price |
|-------------------|--------------|-------|----------------|
| Tardis 32-bit 3.4 | 4/27/97 | .14mb | Shareware \$20 |

Another utility that will keep your PC's clock correct by checking with one of several different servers.

Home Page Site - <http://www.kaska.demon.co.uk/>

| Name/Version | Release Date | Size | Price |
|------------------------|--------------|-------|-----------|
| Metal Knights 95 0.971 | 4/26/97 | 824kb | Shareware |

Metal Knights is a great new strategy game for you, the Internet Gamer! Build and Rule great empires on different worlds at once and attempt to be the next leader of the Universe: the supreme Metal Knight! You'll have to efficiently manage your cities, harvest natural resources, discover more and more advanced units to crush rival empires. Up to 10 players in each game at once with full Internet support. Excellent gameplay, addictive, an intuitive and very easy to play but still hard to master turn-based game! You may play a few minutes up to a few hours a day, as you want! Internet Game Server Running 24hrs a day! Easy to install, no stupid nag screen! Now includes KnightSpy!

Home Page Site - <http://www.info.polymtl.ca/ada2/skyven/www/metal/>

| Name/Version | Release Date | Size | Price |
|--------------------------|--------------|-------|-------------------|
| WinZip 32-bit 6.3 beta 1 | 4/27/97 | .62mb | Shareware \$29.00 |

A great utility for zipping and unzipping files. This is an absolute must if you want to uncompress zipped files you download from the internet or elsewhere. It has "wizards" which will help novice users with some of the more complicated tasks. This version lets you open and extract UUencoded, XXencoded, BinHex, and MIME files. These files can be opened via the File/Open dialog or via drag and drop. The new Actions- > UUencode menu entry makes it easy to encode files. The new File->Favorite Zip Folders lists all Zip files in your favorite folders by date for easy access.

Home Page Site - <http://www.winzip.com/>

| Name/Version | Release Date | Size | Price |
|---|--------------|--------|----------|
| Microsoft VRML 2.0 Viewer 32-bit beta 1 | 4/28/97 | 1.14mb | Freeware |

The viewer will allow users to view dynamic, high-quality 3-D images based on VRML 2.0 through Microsoft Internet Explorer. By providing a standard mechanism for viewing VRML content, Microsoft hopes to attract a ground swell of compelling 3-D content development for the Web. MS VRML 2.0 Viewer supports standard VRML 2.0 files and specification-compliant VRML 1.0 files.

Windows 95, Internet Explorer 3.02, and DirectX 3a. are required.

Home Page Site - <http://www.microsoft.com/vrml/toolbar/>

| Name/Version | Release Date | Size | Price |
|---------------------------------|--------------|--------|-------|
| Microsoft NetMeeting 32-bit 2.0 | 4/28/97 | 2.50mb | Free |

NetMeeting enables real-time voice and data communications over the Internet. This includes the ability for two or more people to share applications, transfer files, view and illustrate a shared whiteboard, and chat all over standard connections. For example, on an intranet, you can have a voice connection over the office phone system and a data connection over the LAN.

Home Page Site - <http://www.microsoft.com/netmeeting/>

| Name/Version | Release Date | Size | Price |
|--------------|--------------|-------|----------|
| Chgname 3.2 | 4/28/97 | 777kb | Freeware |

This is a totally reshaped and vastly improved version the file enumeration utility, Chgname, which changes the name, dates and attributes of up to 32767 files. Features like wildcards and step enumeration gives the flexibility needed for managing large numbers of files. Comes with a comprehensive help file and complete setup program.

Home Page Site - <http://www.uio.no/~kln/Download/Chgname.html>

| Name/Version | Release Date | Size | Price |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|--------|-------------------|
| PhotoImpact GIF Animator 32-bit 1.5 | 4/28/97 | 1.30mb | Shareware \$29.95 |

There's no need to understand the technical side of the GIF89A specification to create GIF animations. PhotoImpact GIF Animator lets you create compact animations with drag-and-drop simplicity. It features: Drag-and-drop animation and image loading, Modeless user interface, Drag-and-drop composition for layering and layout, Advanced palette management, and Built-in design features.

Home Page Site - <http://www.ulead.com/>

| Name/Version | Release Date | Size | Price |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|-------|-----------|
| CD/Spectrum Pro 32-bit 3.1 build 310 | 4/28/97 | .27mb | Shareware |

CD/Spectrum Pro is a CD-Audio Player with Graphical Spectrum Analyzer for Windows 95. CD/Spectrum Pro will also be ready to run on Windows NT 4.0 (also known as Shell Update Release or SUR) when that version of NT is released. CD/Spectrum Pro has two independent parts: The CD-Audio player and the spectrum analyzer. The CD-Audio player is a full-blown player of audio CDs for your PC. It has many advanced features and complements the spectrum analyzer. The spectrum analyzer graphically depicts the frequency spectra of the CD music in real time. (Unless you don't have a Pentium, in which case it is *almost* real time)

Home Page Site - <http://www.halcyon.com/gator/cdspro.htm>

| Name/Version | Release Date | Size | Price |
|---------------------------|--------------|-------|------------------|
| Bear Resemblance Game 2.0 | 4/30/97 | 279kb | Shareware \$5.00 |

A sliding-tile puzzle played with triangular tiles. No other program like this exists in the world at the time of this writing to the best of my knowledge. This game uses fewer tiles than the so-called "15 game" but is an order of magnitude harder to solve. This is a self-contained program; no installation or additional run-time files are needed.

Home Page Site - <http://www1.shore.net/~puzzle/freeware/page3.htm>

| Name/Version | Release Date | Size | Price |
|----------------------|--------------|-------|----------|
| Search 4 32-bit 2.02 | 4/28/97 | .80mb | Freeware |

Search 4 runs in your System Tray, It serves as a "quick-launch" to four of the most powerful Search Engines on the web (Alta Vista, Lycos, WebCrawler, or Yahoo!) in the form of a pop-up menu. In addition to simply linking you to powerful search engines, Search4 also allows you to specify a word, group of words, or phrase to search for - before your browser is even running. Simply click "Search" and it queries all four search engines and returns the results from those queries together, in the form of four framed windows in your browser (Supports Netscape and Internet Explorer)

Home Page Site - <http://www.intermania.com/search4/index.html>

| Name/Version | Release Date | Size | Price |
|---------------------------------|--------------|------|-------|
| Liquid Music Player 32-bit 1.01 | 4/29/97 | N/A | Free |

Provides a media-rich musical experience which allows users to view art, lyrics and credits as well as production, agency and copyright information while listening to high-fidelity music on the Internet. In addition to the media browsing features, the free Liquid MusicPlayer makes it simple to download true CD-quality Dolby Digital encoded songs, or direct you to ordering information to add the disc to your home collection.

Home Page Site - <http://www.liquidaudio.com/>

| Name/Version | Release Date | Size | Price |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|--------|-----------|
| LOL Chat 32-bit 2.0 Official Release | 4/29/97 | 1.00mb | Free Beta |

A new chat client that features Unlimited Connections , Full Answering Machine, Multiple File Transfer, Login List, Surf Mode with support for Netscape and Internet Explorer and much more.

Note: 'was CyberBabble'

Home Page Site - <http://www.lolchat.com/>

| Name/Version | Release Date | Size | Price |
|---|--------------|--------|-------|
| Microsoft Internet Gaming Zone 32-bit 2.0 | 4/29/97 | 2.56mb | Free |

The Internet Gaming Zone is Microsoft's online FREE gaming software/service. You can play games such as Hearts, Bridge, Spades, Chess, Checkers, Go, and Reversi. It's not all board and card games though, you can also play most of MS's new games like MS Golf 3.0, Hellbender, Monster Truck Madness and Close Combat. It also has ZoneLAN, which allows players to use multiplayer games requiring the IPX protocol. (Like what Kali does).

Note: Requires Win95/NT and MSIE 3.02

Home Page Site - <http://www.zone.com/asp/default.asp>

| Name/Version | Release Date | Size | Price |
|--------------------|--------------|---------|--------------|
| Winter Race 3D .30 | 5/1/97 | 7,300kb | Demo \$19.95 |

Ski on one track in this racing game demo. Players must avoid obstacles such as monster trucks and pools of water by ducking or jumping.

Home Page Site - <http://www.3dgamearena.com/>

| Name/Version | Release Date | Size | Price |
|--------------|--------------|-------|-------------------|
| Awale 2.0.2 | 4/28/97 | 817kb | Shareware \$10.00 |

This brand new version of the most popular African games (also known as Avele, Wari, Oware, Mancala, and so on...) includes many new features that bring this shareware to unreached levels in computerized African games.

Home Page Site - <http://members.aol.com/GBShare/gbshare.htm>

| Name/Version | Release Date | Size | Price |
|------------------|--------------|-------|-------------------|
| HipClipboard 1.0 | 4/30/97 | 738kb | Shareware \$15.00 |

Enhances the Windows desktop with up to eight independant clipboard-buffers, each having its own hotkeys for copy, cut and paste. You can run it totally in the background or you can watch and modify the buffers in an easy-to-use environment. HipClipboard is very useful if you have more than one piece of text that you want to insert at different locations of a document. Get rid of the annoying switching around between documents. It can also be useful when surfing on the internet: If you want to visit some new sites, you can first copy or enter their addresses into HipClipboard. When going online you have them all at your fingertips and you will not waste any time typing them in while you are online.

Home Page Site - <http://members.tripod.com/~tier/hc.html>

| Name/Version | Release Date | Size | Price |
|---------------------|--------------|--------|-----------|
| V-Phone 32-bit 2.10 | 5/01/97 | 2.50mb | Shareware |

V-Fone is a new software product that will instantly transform your computer into a video conferencing station. With V-Fone you can send and receive - in real time - video, audio and text to and from anyone in the world via the internet or local area network(TCP/IP). This breakthrough technology provides full-motion video (up to 15 frames per second), supports full color, runs on Windows 95/NT and works on all major on-line services.

Home Page Site - <http://www.summersoft.com/>

| Name/Version | Release Date | Size | Price |
|-------------------------|--------------|-------|-----------|
| WS-FTP 32-bit 4.20 beta | 5/01/97 | .59mb | Shareware |

Designed for non-programmers but sophisticated enough for power users, WS_FTP is widely recognized as the fastest, most powerful Windows file transfer client application available. WS_FTP takes full advantage of Windows' point-and-click capabilities. Its highly intuitive graphical user interface with side-by-side directory windows for local and remote sites makes it easy for users to select and transfer files.

Home Page Site - <http://www.csra.net/junodj/>

| Name/Version | Release Date | Size | Price |
|-----------------------------|--------------|--------|----------------|
| Shell Wizard Pro 32-bit 3.0 | 5/01/97 | 1.70mb | Shareware \$15 |

Do you wish to remove those arrow overlays that Windows puts on the shortcuts that you make on the desktop? Or do you wish to change some other

things about Windows 95 but have no idea of how to do it? ShellWizard takes all the hard parts of configuring Windows 95 the way you like it. Its simple interface offers easy navigation and includes a detailed online manual. ShellWizard offers a Macro Language which allows you to use pre-existing "plugins" which expand the capabilities of ShellWizard. ShellWizard's Macro Language even allows you to create your own "plugins" to further customize ShellWizard and Windows 95.

Home Page Site - <http://www.shellwizard.com/>

| Name/Version | Release Date | Size | Price |
|-------------------------------|--------------|-------|----------------|
| Multimedia Xplorer 32-bit 1.2 | 5/01/97 | .75mb | Shareware \$20 |

Multimedia Xplorer is a new, powerful 32-bit application (Windows 95/NT 4.0) for handling most types of multimedia files including images, sounds, videos and icons. Main idea is to provide ONE application that handles all these different media types easily, so no need to mess with different applications. It is designed to be powerful for powerusers and at the same time it is as simple as possible, so novice users can view and manage files easily. Multimedia Xplorer has some unique ergonomony features that make it very handy to use.

Home Page Site - <http://www.moonsoftware.ee/>

| Name/Version | Release Date | Size | Price |
|--------------------------|--------------|--------|----------------|
| Kali for Win95 beta 1.1o | 5/1/97 | 2.00mb | Shareware \$20 |

Kali is the largest Internet gaming system in the world with over 100,000 users and 300 servers in 35 countries. "So what do Kali actually do? Simple: Kali makes your Internet connection appear to be an IPX connection to your game. This means that all those IPX games can now be played with a number of other users over the Internet.

Home Page Site - <http://www.kali.net/>

| Name/Version | Release Date | Size | Price |
|-----------------------|--------------|--------|---------------|
| Crumbler97 32-bit 1.7 | 5/01/97 | 1.10mb | Shareware \$5 |

Crumbler97 is a quick, easy, SAFE way to accept cookies..those annoying little bits of info that nearly all web pages send to your hard drive...Now, instead of leaving the Security level to WARN everytime, and having to reject individually the sometimes DOZENS of cookies sent, you can merely auto accept them.. and they are DELETED from your Hard Drive every 45 seconds via a Tray icon. Or, if you just entered a site that you know lays the cookies on thick, say, Microsoft, then, no prob..just double click the tray icon, and they are gone... Easy to use. No Mess, No Bother, No CRUMBS!

Home Page Site - <http://www.scscorp.com/personal/scottmac/crumbler.htm>

The Story of Cerious

By Laura Shook

Cerious Software was founded by Phillip Crews in 1992 as a software consulting firm. Phillip continued to work at his full-time job but worked part time doing freelance UNIX, VMS and Windows System programming for companies in the US.

Mandelbrot was written in 1993, Phillip's first significant Windows application.

Mandelbrot produces gorgeous fractal images based on Benoit Mandelbrot's equations. You can select the colors to use, zoom anywhere within the set, generate perspective views, save and load images, export to BMP files and more. We have recently re-released Mandelbrot as Careware to aid the Option Institute and Fellowship in support of their Son-Rise Program(SM). This organization is dedicated to the caring and loving of autistic children. The Son-Rise Program trains parents of autistic children to help their children reclaim their lives. They work miracles for these families.

In 1994, Phillip decided to develop a retail product for Windows called ThumbsUp! He chose to offer ThumbsUp as a shareware product because he liked the idea of "try before you buy" and it was really the only way to cost-effectively market/advertise the product. ThumbsUp was Phillip's answer to album type graphic software. You can check out our tongue-in-cheek Top Ten List from <http://www.cerious.com/topten.html>.

A trademark search found no other computer products named ThumbsUp, but a few months later another North Carolinian company called to let Phillip know that they had registered a trademark on the name, which they had actually used for a couple of years.

Phillip held an on-line contest to select a new name. This contest generated a lot of publicity for Thumbs. Phillip examined 100's of entries from users on CompuServe, AOL and the Internet. There were some outrageous submissions! The end result of the contest was of course the new name ThumbsPlus, which was submitted by Ralph Mariano!

In July of 1994 Phillip quit his day job to pursue Cerious Software and ThumbsPlus full-time. In late August Phillip and his new assistant (and sister), Laura Shook, moved into a real office. Laura had formerly worked as a pediatric nurse, art teacher, and wrote an occasional free-lance article, but had no real knowledge of computers until that August when she began learning about computers, graphics, ThumbsPlus and customer relations in a Software company. It was during this time that NASA, and other large companies and corporations began to ask for helpful additions to ThumbsPlus. Cerious Software obliged and made some very good friends! ThumbsPlus's popularity continued to grow and in July of 1995, Phillip hired Jeff Hurley a former co-worker, computer hacker and friend, who organized the incorporation of Cerious Software, Inc. Cerious Software then moved to another larger suite in the same office building. We have

since moved again and hired three other employees: Pam Perry who is our office manager, Hugh McArtan in tech support and Marcia Vejar who does all of the shipping of ThumbsPlus.

ThumbsPlus will change the way you look at graphics! Whether you're a web professional, graphic artist or casual Internet user, you'll find that ThumbsPlus helps you keep track of your images. Already in use by professionals worldwide, ThumbsPlus is fast becoming the preferred product for organizing, viewing and editing graphic files. Supporting over 60 (and counting) file formats internally, with many more formats that can be configured or accessed via OLE, ThumbsPlus is the product of choice in its class by people who need quick, intuitive access to their graphics. Demanding people, like those at Intel, Microsoft, HP, ATI, the Army, the Air Force and the Navy, sing high praises for ThumbsPlus. You can even find it at NASA, where ThumbsPlus accompanies the astronauts on every Space Shuttle flight!

In the past year, after developing a popular web site, Cerious Software, Inc. has received many shareware awards and favorable reviews. These include reviews from PC Magazine, STReport and Go Inside. MCR Online selected ThumbsPlus as the Graphic Utility of 1996. Awards have been received from Slaughterhouse, CyberMad, CompuServe's Win95, Winuser and WinShare forums, Clicked.com, Galt Technology, Dave Central, Tucows, and Stroud's CWS Apps. ThumbsPlus was the download of the week in CorelNET and the pick of the week from Microsoft and Wugnet.

Cerious Software is honored that ThumbsPlus is included in the Naval Criminal Investigative Service's computer crime prevention initiative "Protecting Your Children in Cyberspace". You can visit Protecting Our Children in Cyberspace. The url is:
<http://www.navy.mil/homepages/thumbs/thumbs.html>

Cerious Software and ThumbsPlus are both sponsors of a local children's athletic association, Starclaire Athletic Association.

ThumbsPlus is localized in Japanese and German and there are distributors of the English version in Australia, Belgium, Germany, Japan, New Zealand, The Netherlands and the UK.

Our Macintosh version is now in 4th beta and we hope to be releasing it soon. The 32-bit CD ROM Developer's Kit is also almost finished, much to the delight of many Vendors selling CD ROM's of images who have been waiting patiently for the 32-bit ThumbsCD to be released. Throughout our growth and development, the ThumbsPlus user, whether shareware user or registered user has remained infinitely important to us. We pore over our suggestion lists and implement any and all suggestions that make sense and allow for continuing growth of ThumbsPlus. We are dedicated to ThumbsPlus, Cerious Software and the continuing development of our software and our company.

Edupage

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NSF CONFIRMS IT'S GETTING OUT OF INTERNET NAME BUSINESS

The National Science Foundation has confirmed that it will not renew its contract with Network Solutions Inc. next March, when the contract expires. NSF's decision will effectively remove the government agency from the Internet domain name registration business. "We're hoping by the time the contract expires the Internet community will have found some alternative mechanisms" for domain-name registration, says an NSF spokeswoman. Meanwhile, Network Solutions says it will continue to register names, even after the current contract expires: "We certainly expect to be a competitor in registrations come April of '98," says the company's CEO. (Wall Street Journal 25 Apr 97)

EC WANTS DIALOGUE ON NEW INTERNET REGISTRATION PLAN

The European Commission has asked the U.S. government to articulate its policy on various issues involved in revamping the Internet domain name registration system, and has requested a dialogue with the U.S. on how best to respond to the International Ad Hoc Committee's proposal to create seven new top-level domains, to be managed by up to 28 new domain

registrars. The EC also criticized the IAHC for excluding EC representatives as members. An EC spokeswoman noted that the recommendations would not solve the overcrowding among .com names, and would probably contribute to trademark disputes. The Commission, in its comments, also rejected the IAHC's suggestion that the 28 new registrars be chosen by lottery: "We question whether the IAHC or the Internet Society has the authority under U.S. or International Law to do so and doubt that the decisions taken this way would constitute the necessary basis for the legal and commercial stability of the eventual Registrar organizations." (BNA Daily Report for Executives 25 Apr 97)

BELL ATLANTIC-NYNEX MERGER WINS APPROVAL FROM JUSTICE

The U.S. Justice Department has concluded that the proposed Bell Atlantic-Nynex merger does not violate antitrust laws. The combined company, which will be called Bell Atlantic, will be the second-largest telephone company, after AT&T. The newly combined SBC Communications-Pacific Telesis entity will be No. 3. Following the merger, Bell Atlantic will control 39-million phone lines in 13 states, from Maine to Virginia, including the Washington, D.C., Philadelphia and New York metropolitan areas. (Investor's Business Daily 25 Apr 97)

NRC RECOMMENDS FULL ACCESS TO SCIENTIFIC INFORMATION

The National Research Council has released a report recommending that governments around the world guarantee access to electronic databases of scientific information by researchers, educators and others "working in the public good.... Full and open access to scientific data should be adopted as the international norm for the exchange of scientific data derived from publicly funded research." The report warns against proposals currently under consideration by the World Intellectual Property Organization, the European Community and the U.S. House of Representatives, saying they do not guarantee "fair use" of data by the scientific and education communities. "If adopted in their current form, these legal proposals could jeopardize basic scientific research and education, eliminate competition in the markets for value-added products and services, and raise existing thresholds to entry into insuperable legal barriers to entry." www.nap.edu/ (Chronicle of Higher Education 25 Apr 97)

INTERNET HOME TO HUNDREDS OF GET-RICH-QUICK SCHEMES

The Federal Trade Commission teamed up with securities regulators and attorneys-general in 24 states last month, and in one day of Web surfing found 215 cases of "marketers touting the potentially fantastic earnings to be made by consumers who buy into their business-opportunity schemes." The claims included one touting earnings of \$78,000 a year selling food from vending carts, one claiming earnings up to \$100,000 a year for grooming pets, and one advertising income of \$20,000 a month operating "900" phone services. The FTC warned each questionable marketer that such claims must be substantiated by solid evidence. When it tried to revisit the sites last Monday, 37 had shut down and seven had deleted or changed their statements. "We encourage consumers surfing the Web for new business opportunity to insist on seeing substantiation for every objective claim a company makes, as well as a list of every person who has signed up for the business," says the director of the FTC's Bureau of Consumer Protection. The FTC says surfing the Web will be a regular part of their enforcement activities. (Wall Street Journal 25 Apr 97)

FREE SOFTWARE FOR TRACKING THE MARKET

MicroQuest, a software company that specializes in investment software, and PC Quote Inc., a company that provides market information for the Web, are teaming up to give away a software package that tracks stocks and financial news. MicroQuest's Inside Track Micro software package allows users to leave the software running behind the scenes while they perform other computer tasks. The software then downloads requested stock quotes and other information at designated intervals, and alerts the user when a stock reaches a certain price. "It's kind of like your own broker in a box," says MicroQuest's president for operations. www.pcquote.com. (Tampa Tribune 26 Apr 97)

INTERNET TELEPHONY TO HURT MAJOR TELECOM CARRIERS

A report prepared by the London consulting firm Philips Tarifica predicts that Deutsche Telekom, which is the largest telecommunications group in Europe, will see revenues from international phone calls drop by at least \$171 million in 2001 as the result of cheap Internet telephony, and that the same fate will befall other major telecoms, including AT&T, KDD of Japan, and VNSL in India. (Financial Times 26 Apr 97)

NEW INTEL CHIPS INSPIRE PRICE REDUCTION ON OLDER PCs

In anticipation that Intel will cut some chip prices next quarter by nearly 40% as part of a transition to its next-generation Pentium II processors, computer manufacturers have decided to announce price reductions on their current PCs with older technology. (San Jose Mercury News 26 Apr 97)

COMPUSERVE, AFTER TIME-OUT, CALLS TIME-IN

CompuServe and Time Inc. have ended a breach-of-contract dispute and planned to restore Time magazine content to CompuServe's online service. CompuServe had attempted to terminate the contract in January after deciding that Time's online content was not of sufficient value to continue the agreement. (AP 26 Apr 97)

EUROPE LOOKS TO SHORT-TERM PROGRAMS FROM THE U.K.

Many European companies, lagging behind England in the application of information technology to business problems, are paying young programmers from the United Kingdom as much as \$3,200 a week if they are experts in Java, database systems, or the Internet. The programmers work on short-term projects. "German companies are slowly warming to the concept of part-time workers who come in for three months to do a special job and then leave." (Financial Times 25 Apr 97)

ONE MORE REASON TO DRIVE A MERCEDES

As part of a demonstration of technological feasibility, a Mercedes E420 automobile has been outfitted by Daimler-Benz research engineers with equipment to allow its driver and passengers access to the Internet and the World Wide Web. The idea is that, sometime in the future, it will be routinely possible for drivers to do such things as receive customized traffic alerts, allow car repair centers to conduct remote diagnoses of automobile breakdowns, do e-mail, and of course read Edupage. The demonstration vehicle is equipped with three flat-panel displays, a wireless digital cellular phone and modem, a palmtop computer for transferring data to the car system, and a global positioning navigational system that uses satellite transmissions to display map data and other

information. (New York Times 29 Apr 97)

TICKETMASTER SUES MICROSOFT

Ticketmaster Group has filed a lawsuit in Los Angeles federal court against Microsoft, alleging that Microsoft's practice of offering a link from its Seattle Sidewalk entertainment site to Ticketmaster's Web site against Ticketmaster's wishes is "electronic piracy." Ticketmaster says a formal agreement, such as the one it recently finalized with CitySearch, is necessary before another company can offer a link to its site. Ticketmaster had sought such an agreement with Microsoft, but when negotiations fizzled, Microsoft decided to offer the link anyway. Ticketmaster maintains that the unauthorized link dilutes the value of its own sponsorship by companies such as MasterCard, and says that Microsoft was able to attract advertising to its Seattle Sidewalk site based on the Ticketmaster link. "They want to suck up our content and keep the advertising revenue from it," says Ticketmaster's CEO. (Wall Street Journal 29 Apr 97)

ARPA FUNDS RESEARCH TO SPEED UP INTERNET

The Advanced Research Projects Agency is funding research projects at the University of Utah, MIT, the University of Arizona and BBN Planet in the hope of developing a new "active network" architecture that would enhance the performance and flexibility of the Internet. "An IP packet is passive," says a computer scientist at the University of Utah. "Any IP-directed action is hardwired into the router. This new work involves injecting code into the packets." The smarter packets could then convey to the receiving computer that information is wanted, allowing them to modify router information accordingly. The data could then be handled in the most efficient way possible. (InfoWorld Electric 25 Apr 97)

PRODIGY TO OFFER INTERNET SERVICE IN CHINA

Prodigy Inc. is working with China North Industries to offer Internet access, initially in the Shanghai area. Shanghai Prodigy Telecommunications Inc., as the joint venture is called, will create Chinese language online content, and will be made available to guests in various Shanghai hotels, as well as the Chinese public. The Chinese government has stipulated that the new service must use filtering technology, allowing them to block undesirable content. Prodigy noted that its family-oriented reputation was a plus in persuading the Chinese Government to allow them to offer the service. "We have a good image, and China is concerned about content," says Prodigy Chairman Greg Carr. Up until now, the largest Internet provider in China has been the Ministry of Posts & Telecommunications' Chinanet service, but with subscriber numbers approaching 100,000, Chinanet is having trouble keeping up. Prodigy expects its Chinese service to have 100,000 subscribers in 18 months. (Wall Street Journal 29 Apr 97)

TV-COMPUTER FROM COMPAQ AND THOMSON

Compaq Computer and Thomson Consumer Electronics say they will market a \$5,000 "PC Theatre" that combines a Compaq computer with an RCA 36-inch television set (RCA is a Thomson brand). A number of other companies are developing similar products, in anticipation of consumers' need to replace or convert their existing analog TV sets for digital ones by the year 2006. The Compaq-Thomson product will be sold as two separate modular products -- a TV and a computer that can be combined into one system. (AP 28 Apr 97)

MICROSOFT ADDS PHONE FEATURES TO BROWSER

Microsoft's NetMeeting software, which will be incorporated into the next version of its Explorer Web browser, will enable users to place telephone calls to conventional telephone handsets, in addition to conducting videoconferences over the Internet and collaborating on word processing and spreadsheet documents. Company officials say 60 companies have agreed to develop products compatible with NetMeeting. (Wall Street Journal 28 Apr 97)

VLSI'S AMAZING SHRINKING CHIP CIRCUITRY

Chipmaker VLSI Technology has developed a way to make computer chips with lines of circuitry just 0.20 microns in width (one micron is one one-hundredth the width of a strand of human hair). The announcement catapults VLSI to the top of the heap in the ongoing competition to pack more circuitry onto silicon chips. VLSI's previous best effort was 0.35, and even the most advanced competitors, such as Intel and Motorola, are just now shifting to 0.25 production. "For a short window, companies can get a market advantage," says a market research analyst. "But for the long run, it's just the ante to stay in the game." (Wall Street Journal 28 Apr 97)

DOE WARNS OF NASTY VIRUS

The U.S. Department of Energy has issued a report warning computer users not to download and run a file called AOL4Free.com. The "Trojan Horse" program eventually wipes out all files on a user's hard drive, although some files may be saved by quickly pressing the "control-c" keys. DOE says the danger of the AOL4Free.com file shouldn't be confused with rumors of an AOL4Free-infected e-mail message that attacks a system when the e-mail is read. That warning is a hoax. (St. Petersburg Times 28 Apr 97)

TRINITY U. STUDENTS COLLABORATE ON HOME-AUTOMATION PROJECT

Three engineering students at Trinity University have developed a system that enables a PC to control a household's appliances, including lighting, a thermostat, a security device, and an answering machine. The system is designed to handle 256 electric appliances altogether, including TV sets, radios and coffee makers. (Chronicle of Higher Education 2 May 97)
www.engr.trinity.edu/~ha/ .

TV STATS

The Consumer Electronics Manufacturers Association says that there are 240 million TV sets in the U.S., with an average of 2.4 sets per home. The percentage of households that have TV sets is 99%, which is higher even than the percentage having telephones (94%). (New York Times 27 Apr 97)

BOEING GETS IN ON TELEDESIC DEAL

Boeing is partnering with Teledesic, a satellite data communications venture partly owned by Microsoft Chairman Bill Gates and cellular pioneer Craig McCaw, to build the \$9-billion network of several hundred low-Earth-orbit satellites. As part of the deal, Boeing will purchase a 10% stake in Teledesic for \$100 million. When complete, the Teledesic network will offer broadband Internet access, videoconferencing and interactive multimedia services anywhere in the world. (Investor's Business Daily 30 Apr 97)

JUDGE THROWS OUT KEYBOARD VERDICT

A federal judge has thrown out a record-breaking \$5.3-million verdict against Digital Equipment Corp. after new evidence indicated the plaintiff's wrist injuries were caused by a neck condition unrelated to working conditions. However, in a separate ruling, the court upheld a smaller, \$274,000 verdict awarded to a co-plaintiff. The judge also threw out a third \$302,000 ruling awarded to another co-plaintiff, saying the statute of limitations had expired. The first plaintiff's lawyer says they plan to appeal the decision. (Wall Street Journal 30 Apr 97)

XEROX TECHNOLOGY PROTECTS ONLINE COPYRIGHT

Xerox has developed a Digital Property Rights Language (DPRL) that encrypts any digital work -- book, movie, software or other -- and delivers it in a "digital envelope" to a recipient with a designation as to how the recipient may use that work: "For instance, a Web publisher could watermark a file if it is printed or disallow printing unless it is sent to a trusted printer." The company, which began developing DPRL four years ago, is now converting its software to Java, ensuring that DPRL will run on all platforms. www.parc.xerox.com/ (InfoWorld Electric 26 Apr 97)

WILL ELLISON BUY APPLE? YES. NO. MAYBE.
NOT AT THE MOMENT.

Oracle CEO Larry Ellison, who had been telling people that he was considering put together a hostile takeover of Apple so that he could use that company's manufacturing facilities to produce the stripped-down "network computers" he's been preaching about, says that -- at least for now -- he has canceled plans to buy Apple. However, he has left open the possibility that he will "revisit in the future his decision regarding an acquisition of control of that firm." (New York Times 30 April 97)

UUNET PLANS SPARK PROTESTS

UUNet Technologies recently informed about a dozen smaller companies that it will begin charging them for access to its "backbone" network. The company currently carries those messages for free. UUNet CEO John Sidgmore justified the change, saying that lately it had been inundated with a "flood of requests" from small Internet companies, asking that UUNet carry their traffic. Smaller companies have accused UUNet of trying to create an "oligopoly" of just a few major Internet players, because UUNet has said will not charge fees to peers -- companies of comparable size -- but only to the smaller ones. (Wall Street Journal 1 May 97)

MINING COMPANY DIGS UP NET GOLD

The Mining Company, brainchild of former Prodigy exec Scott Kurnit, offers a directory of about 300 Web sites selected by a cadre of free-lance workers who dig up eclectic sites to add to the mix. "We've found the elusive 500 channels," says Kurnit, who hopes to have 1,000 sites listed by year's end, and 2,500 in 1998. "In a 500-channel world, you'd have a NASCAR channel," he says. "You start to get more eclectic." So far, the Mining Company boasts nine large advertisers, including IBM, Big Yellow and Moet. "The big question is, can a number of people do this and do this by pointing to quality sites?" asks Kurnit, who hopes his new venture eventually will supplant many of the one-size-fits-all search engine sites. www.miningco.com (Broadcasting & Cable 28 Apr 97)

INTERNET SHOPPING SLOW TO CATCH ON

A survey by America's Research Group found that more than half of consumers who'd ordered products over the Internet wouldn't do so again. Respondents complained of security issues, a cumbersome return process and delivery costs. As a result, ARG predicts that the Internet won't become a major retail venue for at least 10 years. (Investor's Business Daily 30 Apr 97)

GATES: MICROSOFT NEWS WON'T COMPETE WITH NEWSPAPERS

Microsoft chief executive Bill Gates told a group of newspaper publishers that their industry should not get "overly paranoid" over Microsoft's news partnership with the NBC television network and the development of information products for the general public. He said he has no plans to sell classified ads or hire local news reporters. "Don't think of Microsoft as a primary competitor here, but think of us as somebody who can provide technology." (AP 30 Apr 97)

NETSCAPE CEO TO WORK FOR FREE THIS YEAR

Acting on the conviction that his personal compensation should be linked to the long-term interests of the company and its shareholders, Netscape chief executive James L. Barksdale has elected to forego any salary or cash bonuses for 1997 because Netscape stock fell by two-thirds last year. (New York Times 1 May 97)

TURNER WANTS BUGS BUNNY FOR EVERYONE

Ted Turner, the vice chairman of Time Warner, says that the TV entertainment channels he created for the international market are having difficulty making money. In Asia, the problems are that the shows require dubbing into so many different languages, and that India, Taiwan and China already have successful local entertainment shows of their own; in France, Turner venture is struggling with a different problem: "The French are very protectionist. I've given up on the French. Why is France the only country in the world that won't let in Bugs Bunny? Boo, boo, boo." (Atlanta Journal-Constitution 1 May 97)

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INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE The CAUSE organization's annual conference on information technology in higher education is scheduled for the end of this month in New Orleans. The conference will bring together administrators, academicians and other managers of information resources. For full conference information check out <<http://cause-www.colorado.edu> > or send e-mail to conf@cause.colorado.edu.

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Cheyenne's Virus Clinic STR Focus

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Kids Computing Corner
Frank Sereno, Editor
fsereno@streport.com

The Kids' Computing Corner
Computer news and software reviews
from a parent's point of view

In the News

STR Software Give-Away

As promised, The Kids' Computing Corner and the Silicon Times Report are sponsoring another software give-away promotion. Thanks to the fine people at MECC, I have one copy of Storybook Weaver Deluxe to give a lucky reader. This excellent program encourages children to develop their writing skills and to express their creativity with words and pictures. It's recommended for children ages 6 and up, and the software comes on a hybrid format CD-ROM for both Windows and Macintosh operating systems.

The rules are very simple. Send an entry by e-mail to fsereno@streport.com or fsereno@uti.com. Error! Bookmark not defined. using the title "Storybook". Please include your correct e-mail address. Entries must be received by 12:01am, Thursday May 8, 1997. The winner will be announced in the May 9th edition of the magazine. Winners of any contests held within the last 60 days are ineligible. Taxes, if any, are the responsibility of the winner. This is the final week for entries, so flood my mailbox, gang!

Lockergnome Online

From idyllic Iowa comes a most newsworthy computer information resource. Lockergnome Online is a name to remember when you are looking for a terrific E-zine. Chris Pirillo and his staff pack a great deal of wit,

whimsy and wisdom within the zine's compact text. Best of all, this informative prose is sent directly to you for free via e-mail.

Lockergnome Online comes in two alternating flavors. The news issues cover the latest topics of interest in the computer world and include links to numerous online articles and resources. The software issues give the scoop on the hottest and best public domain, shareware and commercial software demo programs.

Each issue is written in a friendly, humor-filled style that makes for amusing reading. You're not only informed, but entertained by the pages of Lockergnome Online.

To find out more about Lockergnome Online, visit the zine's Web site at <http://www.lockergnome.com>. Be sure to read the page telling the history of the publication's name. Pick up a couple of recent issues and check them out. I'm sure that you will agree with me that Lockergnome is delightfully entertaining and enlightening. It's a winner!

Shivers II
Harvest of Souls
Windows CD-ROM
Street Price: \$49.95
For ages 13 and older
(Contains realistic blood)

Sierra
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Bellevue, WA 98007
(206) 641-7617
<http://www.sierra.com>

Program Requirements

| | |
|-----------|-------------------------------|
| OS: | Windows 3.1 |
| CPU: | 486DX/66 |
| HD Space: | none |
| Memory: | 12 MB |
| Graphics: | 640 x 480, 256 colors |
| CD-ROM: | Double-speed |
| Audio: | Windows compatible sound card |
| Optional: | mouse, keyboard |

review by Jason Sereno (jason.sereno@mules-ear.com)

Sierra's new release, Shivers II: Harvest of Souls, answers the age old question: If you are alone in a deserted town and you scream, is there anyone alive to hear you make a sound? Sierra, who created the original Shivers is now releasing the sequel to their smash hit. Shivers II has a new story line, lush graphics and video sequences, and loads and loads of mind bending puzzles. The program features a panoramic interface that lets you scroll to see all of your surroundings in a 3D view. The double length CD-ROM also contains a bonus audio soundtrack featuring six songs. If you find trouble solving puzzles you can chat with others on the Internet while playing. Shivers II is a thriller-mystery that will make you think while solving puzzles and unwrapping a spine-tingling story line.

The plot of the story is simple. You are a musician in a band named Trip Cyclone. You and your band members have decided to shoot a new music video

in a small town in Arizona also named Cyclone. You are late arriving to the town, but when you get there you find it nearly deserted. There are no signs of your friends, only their belongings. There is little sign of any life actually except for a rude motel manager who also disappears after you meet him. Your friends have left strange messages on your motel room answering machine pleading with you to leave for your own safety.

When you first arrive in Cyclone, the game shows you a little bit about the premise. When you enter your hotel room and lay down, you have a vivid dream that depicts the events that took place before you came to this strange town. Apparently, many men in the town play cards at the church in the town center on certain nights. They also have some alcohol present when they play. It appears that one night the men had a little too much to drink and decided to drive home after one of their late night card games. One car hit a woman broadside and killed her. Since it is a small town and the men have paid off the town sheriff, the accident is kept secret. The men even deny their drunkenness and claim that they were sober when the accident occurred.

Another odd thing that happens is that some men in the town were digging mines when they came upon some Indian artifacts including some petrified Indian bodies. Even though some people were against it and warned the other residents, the townspeople put the artifacts and body parts on display all and tried to start a tourist attraction in Cyclone. There are many books that describe the danger of this in the town library but the townspeople paid no attention. These events, along with many others, are responsible for what happens to the town of Cyclone.

When playing the game you find that your friends have been abducted by Darkcloud, a mysterious figure who seems to have gained the power of an ancient Indian mask. While playing the game, you try to learn the identity of Darkcloud and the reason he captured your friends. You soon learn that to defeat Darkcloud and prevent him from unleashing his power on all of the earth you will need to collect twelve Bahos sticks. After placing them in Devil's Mouth Canyon, you will have the final confrontation with him. Darkcloud will have many riddles and puzzles that you must solve to find each of the twelve Bahos sticks.

After you have solved the puzzles that are necessary and you have obtained a Bahos stick, the process is not over. You must enter the canyon and find a petrograph (a Native American version of the Egyptian hieroglyphics). You must find the corresponding symbol to each individual Bahos stick and then solve a puzzle. These are tangram puzzles. You must fit together smaller pieces to fill a larger shape. You will solve twelve tangram puzzles, one for each Bahos stick. The puzzles are hard to crack because it seems that you might have found the correct combination until you realize that there is one piece that will not fit in the space provided.

After you have solved a puzzle, you must travel farther into the canyon and reach a door that is the holding place of the Bahos sticks. You will have to match each stick to the proper place in the mantel. After you have finished with one, you must go back into the town and find the others. You must keep in mind that when you possess a Bahos stick, your life energy will decrease. When you place it in the canyon, you will receive more energy.

The story line is complemented by great graphics that add a creepy and uncanny feeling throughout the game. There is a great tone through out with the green colors in the sky and the reddish terrain. Each building

and scene use several hues of different colors. For instance, the Sheriff's office has a purple tone while the motel lobby is mostly shades of red. This is good to have because it distinguishes the locations and livens things up a bit instead of having all of the locations black and dull. If you find yourself wanting to go to a different location, you can save time by jumping to the map. From here you can enter any location that you have previously entered. If you are low on life due to the drain of a Bahos stick, you can quickly go to the canyon and replenish your energy by using the map instead of traveling all around the town of Cyclone.

The program uses QuickTime movies to present the characters of the game. The dream sequence in the beginning is also in QuickTime as are the music videos that help you locate your friends and solve puzzles. The music videos have important clues in them that help you solve puzzles and find all of the Bahos.

When in the town of Cyclone and in the locations, the game lets you use a great panoramic interface. You can see all of your surroundings by moving your mouse up, down, left, and right. I cannot express how much more fun this interface is to use than other first person (non-shoot em up) type games' interfaces. This interface lets you view any and all of the objects at your location from where you are standing. Let's not get confused here, the places where you can stand are limited. Shivers II is not a full scrolling-type game. You can view your surroundings from only certain points where you are walking. For example: If I was the motel room at the Cyclone motel that I first started in and I wanted to examine the dresser drawers. I would first walk to a position that is close to the dresser. I would do this by clicking my mouse (which turns into an arrow when you can move to a destination) on or the area surrounding the dresser. Now I would be able to turn 360 degrees in all directions to look for objects or other possible directions to travel in. From this spot I could actually choose to examine the contents of the trash can in the corner of the room, watch the television, or I could open the suitcase with a key (after I had found it of course). If I clicked on the suitcase, the panoramic view would cease and the screen would show the suitcase alone. From here I can open the suitcase with the key, examine the things inside, shut it, or leave. After that, I would return to the panoramic view and continue on my quest. The way that you look around is by moving your mouse to a side of the screen. If you move it to the far left, you will turn left, when moved to the far right, you will turn right, the same applies for looking up and down. The interface lets you examine objects also and flashback to important highlights. Words cannot adequately describe this truly great interface.

The sound in the game is fantastic. The uncanny feeling that I mentioned before is partly due to the music in the game. There is always some creepy theme that alone will send shivers up your spine. The music usually has a climax that builds tension and then settles again or it may have moans or whisper noises. The music really adds a whole other dimension to the game.

Also included in Shivers II is a bonus soundtrack that has five songs included on it. Since Sierra included this in the software package, I have the opportunity to double my duties as a software analyst and a music reviewer. The CD included is a combination of hard rock tracks with heavy distortion and acoustic guitar riffs. Some songs seems similar to church music, but they sound strangely evil. The lyrics all pertain to the game and even give some hints in the words. There are some parts in the songs that appear to be a little on the techno-side. Each song has two singers, a male with a good, hard rock-n-roll type of voice while the other is a female. She usually sings backup except for two songs. These particular

songs don't appear to be the type of song that would be right for her. She seems to be forcing out parts of the songs. The singers are not working with very good lyrics either. These bonus tracks are only worthwhile listening to decipher game hints from the lyrics. The only other reason I could honestly suggest these tracks to someone would be if they wanted to be depressed in a short time.

If you find yourself stuck in a puzzle, you may find it comforting to know that Sierra has a feature that will enable you to talk to other people over the Internet while playing. You can answer or ask questions about certain areas or talk about solutions through Sierra's SIGS (Sierra Internet Gaming System). This is helpful if you do find yourself at a dead end. There is also a way to make variations to the puzzles and share them with your friends. You can visit the Sierra web page at <http://www.sierra.com> to find tips and screen shots from the game too. Sierra updates the page weekly and it will have more information each time you visit. There is also a message board at the web page for people to ask questions and receive replies from other gamers. If all else fails and you are desperate, I found a very useful walkthrough at <http://www.cheatzone.com>. This is the only web site I found that had a complete walkthrough, partially because the game is so new. There should be other walkthroughs available in the near future once the game gains popularity.

Shivers II is a best buy if you are looking for a program that will test your mind while giving an intriguing story line. It has superb graphics and a great interface. Sierra has really outdone themselves with this tremendous program. It is a good buy for teens and older that can handle this thriller-mystery. There is a little bit of blood, but it is appropriate to the story line. If you are looking for a fabulous puzzle game that will rack your brain in many different ways, Shivers II is for you.

Special Notice!! STR Infofile File format for Articles

File Format for STReport

All articles submitted to STReport for publication must be sent in the following format. Please use the format requested. Any files received that do not conform will not be used. The article must be in an importable word processor format for Word 6.0 and/or Word Perfect 7.. The margins are .05" left and 1.0" Monospaced fonts are not to be used. Please use proportional fonting only and at Twelve (12) points.

- '• No Indenting on any paragraphs!!
- '• No Indenting of any lines or "special gimmickery"
- '• No underlining!
- '• Columns shall be achieved through the use of tabs only. Or, columns in Word or Word Perfect format. Do NOT, under any circumstances, use the space bar.
- '• Most of all.. PLEASE! No ASCII "ART"!!
- '• There is no limits as to size, articles may be split into two if lengthy
- '• Actual Artwork should be in GIF, PCX, JPG, TIF, BMP, WMF file formats
- '• Artwork (pictures, graphs, charts, etc.) should be sent along with the article separately
- '• Please use a single font only in an article. TTF New Times Roman 12pt. is preferred. (VERY Strong Hint)

If there are any questions please use either E-Mail or call. On another note, the ASCII version of STReport is fast approaching the "end of the line" As the major Online Services move away from ASCII.. So shall STReport. All in the name of progress and improved readability. The amount of reader mail expressing a preference for our Adobe PDF enhanced issue is running approximately 15 to 1 over the ASCII edition. Besides, STReport will not be caught in the old, worn out "downward compatibility dodge" we must move forward.

However, if the ASCII readership remains as high, rest assured. ASCII will stay. Right now, since STReport is offered on a number of closed major corporate Intranets as "required" Monday Morning reading.. Our ascii readers have nothing to worry themselves about. It looks like it is here to stay.

Many grateful thanks in advance for your enthusiastic co-operation and input.

Ralph F. Mariano, Editor
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From the Atari Editor's Desk

"Saying it like it is!"

This past week has been interesting. As I mentioned last week, my wife and I are finally seriously considering purchasing our first home. It's a task that's enjoyable, but extremely frustrating (and even stressful!). If that even makes sense! Looking through countless stacks of home ads, setting up appointments to see houses, driving all over creation getting there, listening to real estate agents play up strong points and downplaying the bad, weeding out "bad" prospects, and more.

I know, you heard some of this last week - what does it have to do with Atari computing, you ask! Well, part of our predicament is that both my wife and I want someplace where we can set up our Atari computers - an office of sorts for each of us. My wife does extensive work on her Star Trek fan club and newsletters with a Stacy; I run the two bulletin boards plus my own personal Atari system. These things require space! We've been outgrowing our apartment for quite some time, as well. And, like many enthusiastic Atari users, I amass many things Atari!

I mention this because I just received a couple of HUGE boxes of miscellaneous Atari items. Just some more STuff to add to my ever-growing collection of Atari items. When I spot a good deal on an item, especially when I can put it to immediate good use, I'll try to grab it. I have 2 Falcons, a MegaSTe, 2 MegaSTs, 2 Stacys, 2 or 3 1040STs, 2 520STs, 2 ICD tape drives, and a few odds and ends. Can you tell I'm in for the long haul using Atari computers? <grin> The boxes I just received contain quite a bit of "spare" parts and miscellaneous items - from old 5 1/4 hard drives to various chips; software to books and manuals. An interesting assortment of things which will likely help me maintain my machines for a long time to

come. But I have to be able to store this stuff somewhere!

So, owning our own home will have its benefits in this regard, as well. A basement and a garage are almost a must!

Anyway, we're having some fun looking at various houses. It's frustrating to find a house that we like only to learn it's either "under agreement" or something similar. And add to that the stress of realizing what the final costs are going to be, and for how long! Still, we're looking forward to finally having a place of our own, hopefully RSN!

So, while we continue our search, we have quite a few announcements regarding new Atari products this week - interesting items.

Until next time...

CHECK_M, beta released. (New STiK client)

From: Katherine L Ellis <kellis@primenet.com>

Date: 23 Apr 1997

Hi, I am pleased to announce the release of CHECK_M. CHECK_M is an online email checker. Allows you to constantly check your mail every X minutes. If new mail, a window will pop up on your screen. From there, you can view the email or ignore it. If no new mail has been detected, nothing will happen. Works as an ACC for single-tasking users or as a PRG for multitasking users. This client strictly follows the POP3 RFC. CHECK_M is available on my homepage. Bye

Email:Kellis@primenet.com

Web <http://www.primenet.com/~kellis/>

Hi all!

Latest version of NEWSie is now up to v0.74 and supports MIME decoding via MUNPACK.TTP by Jos den Bekker.

Best Regards

Mille Babic

Hi!

There are two new Email-clients available for use with STiK and an updated version of The CAB Internet Access Module. POPwatch (Freeware) by Gary A. Priest is a POP3 mailbox tool that lets you check your POP3-mailbox before download. You can view part of the email, delete etc. and then download for use with NEWSie, Oasis 2 or NOS. POPwatch also has a Kill File facility for the automatic deleting of emails that meet a specified criteria.

CheckMail (Shareware) by K. Kellis is an on-line mail checker. It allows you to check any new mail without thinking about it. Every X minutes CHECK_M will connect to your POP3 server and verify if any new mail came. If yes, a window will pop up on your screen saying "From" and "size"; from there, you can ignore it or view it. The CAB Internet Access Module

CAB_OVL is up to version 1.25 and is bundled with two modules, one for MC68000 and one optimized for MC68030 machines.

You will find these archives at:

http://www5.tripnet.se/~mille/english/web_apps.html

Best Regards

Mille Babic

eMail: mille@mail5.tripnet.se

<http://www5.tripnet.se/~mille> (English, German, Swedish, Croatian)

Atari Falcon CPU40MHZ:DSP50MHZ (12MB RAM 540MB+1.0GB HD)

N.AES Operating System with MiNT Kernel and N.Thing Desktop

PRESS RELEASE

NEW RELEASE - TETRIS II STRIKES BACK

Floppyshop are pleased to announce the release of Beast Software's latest release, Tetris II Strikes Back. Tetris is one of the oldest computer games around, having made an appearance on near enough every computer platform from the ZX Spectrum to the PC. The first Atari version was written by a team of Russian programmers. There have been many attempts at Tetris clones over the years but the latest, Tetris II, is the best ever. It is called Tetris II for two reasons! It includes two versions of Tetris and has a two player option.

For those who have not played Tetris before, here's a quick run down. Coloured blocks of different shapes and sizes fall from above. Your aim is to guide them as they fall so that they slot into each other to form complete lines. Each time a line is formed, it disappears and you are awarded a number of points. The blocks above it fall down to fill the space. Gameplay continues until the pile of blocks reaches the top of the playing area. This ends the game in some versions of Tetris, in others it merely results in the playing area being cleared and you lose a life.

Is Tetris II Strikes Back is "just" another Tetris clone? Well yes and no... Yes, it does include a faithful recreation of the original BUT also offers an alternative type of game which has a strategic element built-in along with a number of extras, making it more of a challenge than the original ever was. Tetris II Strikes Back (sorry about the long-winded name, Beast Software chose it, not us!) is in fact several game styles built into a single easy to use interface.

The games on offer are Tetris Normal (the original game) and Tetris II, the modern day version. In Tetris II, each level sets you a challenge (for example you must destroy three lines at once, destroy two lines four times and destroy five single lines) and you must complete this challenge to progress to the next. The given tasks vary and get tougher with each new level. In addition, most levels already have blocks placed in the playing area and these must be destroyed fast to avoid a rapid decline in your chances of survival. Some can be eliminated in the usual manner, others need to be bombed, certain blocks are simply indestructable!

In addition to choosing Tetris Normal or Tetris II, you can select which game Type you wish to play. There are two types on offer. The first is as described above and the second (available in both Tetris Normal and Tetris

II) furnishes your armoury with four bombs. These can be guided like missiles and used to target "problem areas". These are not atomic devices (they destroy the targeted area only, not the entire playing field), so use them wisely. Extra bombs can be earned by destroying three lines in a single operation.

Control is by keyboard or joystick. When in two player mode, you both play simultaneously on opposite sides of an enlarged playing area. Other features include passwords for every level (allowing you to recommence play from the last level achieved), excellent music (a compilation of old pop tunes) for ST/STe owners and user definable keyboard control. When running from floppy, no further disk accesses are made after the game has loaded (except for saving the highscore table. The game is hard drive installable.

Tetris II Strikes Back runs on any ST or STe with at least 1Mb of memory and includes a printed manual. A TT/Falcon compatible version is also available. Please state which version is required when ordering. Tetris II Strikes Back is available now for just eight pounds + P&P (UK one pound, Europe two pounds, ROW three pounds). Payment can be made by credit card (Visa, Access, Mastercard, Eurocard accepted) or UK cheque/PO. Overseas customers not paying by credit card should make payment in UK pounds sterling using a cheque drawn on a UK bank, International Money Order, Post Giro, American Express Money Order or Canadian Postal Order.

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Floppyshop, Aberdeen, Scotland.

30th April 1997

PRESS RELEASE

VECTOR ART '97 *

Floppyshop in association with Words & Images are pleased to announce the immediate availability of VECTOR ART '97, a unique collection of almost 450 individual pieces of high quality vectorised clip art. All were created by John Weller a talented DTP enthusiast who goes under the moniker of Words & Images. He has been responsible for countless megabytes of high quality clip art over the years and, more recently, the prestigious Bournemouth Collection of Calamus fonts. He is probably better known in Atari circles as the man behind Enthusiasts PDL and co-editor (along with Dave Mooney) of the ST Enthusiasts Newsletter (STEN).

John is a perfectionist by nature and believes that if a job's worth doing, it's worth doing well, regardless of how long it takes! That's why we asked him to compile this collection of quality vector graphics. You just need to look at the Bournemouth CFN collection to see what we mean. Over 300 fonts with every character in every font individually kerned by hand! The fact that the job takes several hundred hours to complete is entirely irrelevant, the end result must be 100% perfect or John bins it and starts again! That's the sort of quality we are used to in John's work and this latest collection is no exception.

BITMAP or VECTOR

For those of you who don't know the difference between bitmap images and their vector based counterparts here's a brief rundown. Bitmap images are pixel based, each image being made up from thousands (or hundreds of thousands) of dots. Typical bitmap formats are IMG, GIF, TIFF, Degas, NEO etc. These images are usually designed for on-screen display and serve the purpose well. Those which are intended to be printed out (these are usually but not always in IMG format) must be created at resolutions of 300 dots per inch or higher in order to reproduce well when printed. The result is massive files which occupy huge amounts of memory and disk space. Bitmap graphics also have the disadvantage of not being very versatile when it comes to scaling. Scaling an image to a resolution higher than was intended results in the image size reducing, scaling to a lower resolution gives a larger image. It is therefore imperative to scan the image at the resolution of your output device to obtain best results.

Vector graphics (like vector fonts) are a whole new ball game. They are not made up of individual pixels. Instead, they are constructed from lines and bezier curves and the length, angle and relative positioning of these elements in relation to each other, is stored as mathematical data rather than storing the actual lines and curves. The advantages of this method are much smaller file sizes and resolution independence. Scale a well drawn vector graphic as small or as large as you like and you retain the quality. This degree of flexibility is not possible with bitmap images. Atari owners may already be familiar with vector graphics in GEM Metafile or Calamus CVG formats.

How The Images Were Converted

The files started life as large IMG scans, from various PD sources, and were then vectorised with the truly excellent Convector 2. This can be set at various levels of accuracy, giving a range of effects from extremely accurate auto-tracing to a crude, almost 'woodcut' effect in which triangles and rhomboids replace shapes and lines. The majority of the images on these discs have been vectorised at the highest level of accuracy.

Invision was used to thicken and smooth any bitmap image whose fine lines would have been lost during vectorisation. Each one of these 445 images had to be edited to some degree or other. Convector 2 has a 'filter/smooth' routine which can be used to remove any stray dots or irregularities from a scan, but it's a rare image that will vectorise well without a certain amount of tweaking at the bitmap stage. Megapaint II was used to sharpen the images to ensure the best possible results.

What They've Been Tested On

Each file has been checked with Calamus v1.09n, running on a 4 Mb STe with a mono monitor. The majority of them have also been run through O-Line Art, and some through Calamus SL so there's no reason to believe that they'll misbehave in any other program.

About VECTOR ART '97

Vector Art '97 is a collection of CVG vector graphics. These can be used with any version of Calamus or with Kandinsky 2 (registered version), Outline Art, DA's Vector or Arabesque. There are probably a few other packages which also support the CVG format. If your Desktop Publishing program does not support CVG, just load the graphics into Kandinsky and re-save them in GEM format. Every DTP package handles GEM files.

Vector Art '97 consists of 445 images grouped into 30 logical categories (including scrolls, borders, animals, business, food, occasions, humour and symbols). Vector Art '97 is available now for only 10 + P&P (one pound UK, two pounds Europe, three pounds rest of world). Payment can be made by credit card (Visa, Access, Mastercard, Eurocard accepted) or UK cheque/PO. Overseas customers not paying by credit card should make payment in UK pounds sterling using a cheque drawn on a UK bank, International Money Order, Post Giro, American Express Money Order or Canadian Postal Order.

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Newsbytes NewsReel - 12 Years Ago This Week

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA, U.S.A., 1997 APR 30 (Newsbytes) -- By Nick Gorski. Twelve years ago these Newsbytes stories were filed: Dvorak Does It Again; Atari Troubles; and Overseas News. These stories were taken from the extensive archives at the Newsbytes Website at <http://www.newsbytes.com>.

Dvorak Does It Again

Never short on controversy, columnist John Dvorak is once again the first to spill the beans! This time he's written about "the best-kept secret" of the year. Microsoft, he says, will unveil "Excel" at a news conference May 2, a product called a "super spreadsheet" by those who have seen it. Excel will require a 512K Mac and is expected to directly compete with Lotus' still-unfinished "Jazz." Shipments of Excel are expected by August 1. As the Technologic Computer Letter states, "If Lotus does not want Macintosh to become forever known as 'The Microsoft Office,' Jazz must appear within the next 60 days." As for Dvorak, his description of Excel was also accompanied in a San Francisco Chronicle article, with a tirade about a certain national magazine which prohibited him from writing about it. Said magazine and all the other editors who saw Excel were sworn to secrecy. He's so angry about the hush-hush, he says, "Technology writers are often accused of being in bed with industry and this episode seems to bear it out."

Atari Troubles

Tim Bjarin of Creative Strategies in San Jose, Ca., says the Atari Jackintosh, which was displayed at the Hanover Fair in West Germany, crashed nine times in succession while a company official gave him a demonstration, according to a published report. That could be because the Jackintosh on display was the one and same that was shown at January's Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, a prototype! Yet, Atari is said to be ready to ship 5,000 STs to Atari user's groups. Hummm... Meanwhile, Atari's former parent company, Warner, just got slapped with another lawsuit. The Saudi Arabian firm of United Technology Products Inc. wants \$320 million, charging that its Atari video game machines are defective.

Mac's Losing Battle In Japan

Responding to third party developers has been fairly common for major Japanese manufacturers, such as Fujitsu and NEC. Japanese manufacturers are very eager to help software developers, loaning new machines with no charge even before their release and providing free technical information.

However, Apple Japan released Macintosh in an American style without getting help from Japanese software developers beforehand. (It seems their major sales point was placed on the discount sale). Consequently, most of the Japanese software developers that Apple Japan should have depended on preferred to develop software for Japanese machines. The decline of Macintosh started then. Yet, there is some good news. Fat Mac is finally released, and a Japanese wordprocessor (with only one kind of font) is being developed. But, there are just a few application software packages in Japanese. So there's not much optimism on Mac's future here yet.

Hooligan Elements Curtailed By Hi-Tech Cards / Britbytes by Steve Gold.

I guess that US football matches are a whole lot different than those over here in the UK, but we have a social problem with hooligan elements being attracted to the matches -- not to watch, but to fight! Things are so bad over here that London's Chelsea football club has seen fit to install a giant electric fence around their pitch (some humorists say it's to keep the team in, and not the fans out). UK computer firms of Systemsolve and Sperry are now toting the idea that each football supporter (that includes most of the UK), will be issued with a cash-card style piece of plastic which will carry a photo of the offender, er sorry, "fan." Each card will have a magnetic stripe with an ID number printed on it. Fans would then be able to swipe (unfortunate term that) the card through a reader to enter the match. Any fans who behave in a way that won the war, but offends the masses, will have their number taken and will be barred access to the match. Simple..., or is it? Have you ever seen a six foot skinhead with a brick attack an ATM? I know who'll win!

Gaming Section

NFL Quarterback Club!
3DO Sold!
Softimage!
And more!

From the Editor's Controller - Playin' it like it is!

Well, after a long delay due to technical problems, the Jaguar's "Iron Soldier 2" has been released! We're waiting to get our hands on a review copy of the game, as well as hearing some immediate feedback on this one. We're all hoping that it lives up to expectations!

We've also heard that two games announced LONG AGO for the Atari Lynx: "Fat Bobby" and "Raiden" are also now available. Lynx fans will probably enjoy both of these games, but personally, I've seen Raiden enough times on other systems to likely pass on it for the Lynx; Fat Bobby may be a good addition to the collection, however.

Not much else happening on the Jaguar front while we wait to hear some feedback on Iron Soldier 2. Who knows what will be happening next after the fiasco with getting this one out the door! Telegames will probably think long and hard over the next few weeks to determine if the other two announced games (Worms and Zero 5) will be released. We'll keep you posted. In the meantime, let us know how you feel about IS2!

Until next time...

Samsung Buys 3DO's Hardware Division

REDWOOD CITY, CALIFORNIA, U.S.A., 1997 APR 28 (Newsbytes) -- By Richard Bowers. Once the market leader in the console gaming marketplace, 3DO Company has taken the final steps in getting out of the hardware side by selling its hardware division to Samsung for \$20 million in cash. According to 3DO, the deal will "significantly increased capitalization" and completes 3DO's transformation into a video game software company.

Samsung will form a new company based in Silicon Valley focusing on multimedia systems and semiconductor products. Approximately 75 3DO employees, currently in 3DO's hardware systems business, will be offered positions in the new organization. Tobin E. Farrand, currently senior vice president of Engineering for 3DO, will become president and chief executive officer (CEO) of the new Samsung subsidiary.

3DO also announced that founder Trip Hawkins will reassume complete operating control of the new software-focused 3DO as chairman, CEO, and president. Hawkins, who also founded Electronic Arts, said, "This deal allows 3DO to continue our momentum, be more focused, and provides us with the capital to a major player in the video game software business."

He continued: "As a world-class manufacturer, Samsung has the skills to capitalize on the potential of our hardware designs. While we initially pursued a joint venture structure with Samsung, we both eventually agreed that a sales transaction was, in fact, better for both companies, because we could each be more focused on our core competencies." Hawkins also announced key management changes at 3DO. According to 3DO, Hugh Martin, who has served as president and chief operating officer (COO), will oversee the transition of the hardware business to Samsung and phase out of his day-to-day duties. He will remain an active member of the board of directors.

Martin, who has an engineering and operations management background, was responsible for the design and introduction of 3DO's hardware systems. He negotiated the very lucrative licensing of 3DO's M2 technology to Matsushita 18 months ago and he negotiated the sale of the hardware group to Samsung.

The Matsushita deal brought over \$100 million to 3DO, and a continued royalty income stream when Matsushita begins delivering a console with the M2 technology. Under the terms of the Samsung deal, some physical assets of 3DO's hardware systems business will be sold, ownership of certain intangible assets will be assigned, and licenses and sub-licenses covering certain intellectual property rights will be granted to Samsung. Samsung will assume any liabilities for Korean government taxes relating to the transaction and 3DO will receive a net cash payment of \$20 million.

The new Samsung subsidiary will assist 3DO as a subcontractor regarding the completion of the remaining contract obligations due under 3DO's M2 technology license with Matsushita Electric Industrial Company Ltd. 3DO, however, will retain all its rights to receive software royalty revenue from the M2 deal with Matsushita. "We are well-known for our troubles on our first-generation hardware system," said Hawkins. "But we followed that with a significant profit from our second-generation M2 system, and now

we've made another major transaction that is highly profitable.

While we learned our lessons, and made two deals that gave us significant profits, we have realized that the hardware business is for large companies like Samsung and Matsushita." 3DO has recently signed a licensing agreement to publish titles for the Sony PlayStation, and its first hit game for the PC, "Heroes of Might" and "Magic II," has sold almost 200,000 units.

Acclaim For New NFL Nintendo Videogame

Washington, DC, APR. 25 (ISWire Sports Beat) - Acclaim Entertainment Inc. is using the marketing muscle of the National Football League (NFL), the NFL Quarterback Club, Players Inc. -- and Green Bay Packers quarterback Brett Favre -- to launch the NFL Quarterback Club 98 videogame for the Nintendo 64 platform from Nintendo Co. Ltd. in fall of 1997. Acclaim says benefits of the new game include a fully polygonal 3-D players and stadiums, incredibly precise control and Acclaim's proprietary motion-capture animation that allows the players to look and move just like their real-life gridiron counterparts.

Acclaim director of sports marketing Bob Picunko said: We are excited to be the first and only licensed N64 football game on the market for the 1997 season. By combining our advanced motion-capture technology with the speed and superior graphics of the Nintendo 64, we have been able to create a game that would have even [the late Packers coach] Vince Lombardi doing a double take. The game was developed by Iguana Entertainment, creators of the game Turok: Dinosaur Hunter for the Nintendo 64-bit platform. The new title is the latest in a series based on the NFL Quarterback Club.

Softimage Inc: Softimage and Nintendo To Team Up

APR 30, 1997, M2 Communications - Softimage Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of Microsoft Corp., today announced at the Computer Game Developers Conference that it has entered into a development agreement with Nintendo to create a Nintendo Game Development Environment (GDE) for Softimage 3D. The GDE will provide new video game development tools for Nintendo 64 developers using Softimage 3D. For the first time, developers will be able to use Softimage 3D as a tightly integrated component of the Nintendo 64 development environment. This powerful combination will result in titles that take full advantage of Nintendo 64's powerful graphics capabilities.

The Nintendo GDE is part of a continuing program by Softimage to support video game developers on all major game platforms. Because of its close cooperation with developers and platform vendors, Softimage has emerged as a leading provider of game development tools; it provides the most comprehensive solutions for video game development. The team effort with Nintendo supports this goal and demonstrates the Softimage commitment to serving the unique needs of the video game development community.

"Until now, developers of games for Nintendo's 64-bit system were forced to develop their own Nintendo tools using the Softimage SDK," said Moshe Lichtman, president of Softimage. "This new GDE allows developers to concentrate on producing world-class titles rather than development tools. We look forward to continued joint efforts with Nintendo to provide one of the most comprehensive development environments for creators of Nintendo game titles."

The GDE provides tools for seamless export and import of geometry, hierarchies, camera, lights, materials, textures, animation and polygon rendering attributes to ease the production process. A polygon attribute

editor allows designers to control Nintendo 64-specific rendering attributes on a per-polygon basis, and an on-target viewer allows designers to quickly preview the contents of their Softimage scenes on the development hardware. The on-target viewer provides powerful camera manipulation and playback control. These tools help ensure that high-quality content created in Softimage 3D will maintain its rich, dynamic look when displayed on Nintendo 64 consoles.

"With this joint effort, Nintendo 64 game developers will have access to another set of powerful tools, so all our products will continue to give players realistic and exciting games," said Howard Lincoln, chairman, Nintendo of America. "The new GDE will allow developers to fully exploit the industry-leading 64-bit graphics capabilities plus the power of the Nintendo 64 within an easy-to-use integrated development environment." Softimage 3D was used to create the character animation and other stunning content for Nintendo 64's flagship game, Super Mario 64. Other Nintendo titles created with Softimage include Nekketu Professional Baseball King and Wave Race 64. To date, Nintendo has shipped more than 6 million Nintendo 64 systems worldwide. The new Nintendo 64 targeted tools will be shown publicly for the first time in the Softimage booth at the Computer Game Developers Conference.

Jaguar Online STR InfoFile - Online Users Growl & Purr!

IS2 CD-Rs
From: Wes Powell <powell@easilink.com>
Date: Thu, 01 May 1997

Hi,

Here's some info on the stability of CDRs from the head IS2 programmer, Marc Rosocha.

Hi Wes,

> I heard that CDRs don't last as long as regular CDs...is this true?

All I can say is that none of the many CD-Rs we burned during the deveolpment of IS2 had a problem in this respect so far. We used them heavily for beta testing, sent them around the world and they always worked fine. It may be true that normal CDs are a little bit more stable, but the difference shouldn't be considerable as long as you handle them with the appropriate care. In case of IS2 we had no other choice after different CD manufaturers were not able to replicate it, otherwise there would have been no way to publish the game.

> Also, will there be any type of picture on the CD?

Each CD gets a label, which also means additional protection for the more sensitive upper surface.

Marc

I hope to get IS2 tomorrow!

Take it easy,

Wes Powell

Jagu-Dome

<http://www.geocities.com/SiliconValley/Park/4106/jagu-dome.html>

PEOPLE... ARE TALKING

On CompuServe

Compiled by Joe Mirando
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Hidi ho friends and neighbors. Well, now that Ellen is out of the closet, Majors is on his way out of 10 Downing Street, and Chelsea has picked a school, let's get down to some real business. I'll tell you right off that this is going to be a short column because my efforts to get MiNTnet working on my MegaSTE are driving me nuts. I've always been the kind to stick with something until I finally get results (stubborn?? No, not me! <grin>), but this time has even people who know the system inside and out baffled. No one seems to be able to give me even a hint of why I'm having such trouble getting MiNT to write to a hard drive without errors. I have a feeling that there is something simple that I'm overlooking, but I have no idea of what.

Rest assured, I will keep you updated on my progress (or lack thereof). With my luck, I'll get the results that I've been looking for about a day after a commercial PPP connection package becomes available. Well, let's take a look at what's going on in the CompuServe Atari Forums.

From the Atari Computing Forums

Our friend Myles Cohen asks for info:

"I have downloaded some files with a .TGZ extension...How does one un-tgz them?"

Carl Barron tells Myles:

"Got gzip and tar for atari? If not and they are not here, they should be on a umich mirror.

Be warned tar is a unix program, it can contain LONG file names and symbolic links.

```
gzip -dc filename.tgz
```

```
tar xfv filename.tar #rename result of gzip if not filename.tar
```

```
tar tfv filename.tar # lists the contents of a tar file to screen.
```

Tar is a file buncher, gzip is a compressor."

Myles tells Carl:

"That is good info...Has anyone ever written a "How To" on this subject"

Carl tells Myles:

"I don't know of any specific files that are written. I just searched under my ppn and did not find any. If you have mint and the tar/gzip/shell from taf then you can do both tar and gzip 'at the same time' saving a huge temp file. If you don't then you get a huge temp file.

| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| tar tvf filename | list files in tar file |
| tar xvf filename | extract all files from tar file. |
| tar xvf filename FILENAME[s] | extract FILENAME[s] from tar file.[Case sensitive and unix separators as in tvf listing. |
| tar cvf filename.tar FILENAME[S] | create tar file filename.tar with contents of FILENAME[s]. |
| gzip filename | compress to filename .gz [modified for 3 char extension] |
| gzip -d filename.gz | decompress to filename |
| gzip -dc filename.gz | decompress to stdout [screen or redirected file] |
| gzip -h | should produce a short help screen. |

A shell is recommended as Tos desktop draws on program exit."

On the subject of how to efficiently write description files for programs uploaded to CompuServe, Joe Villarreal posts:

"I write a description offline with a text editor, generally 78 characters wide. When CompuServe asks for a description, I just do a "send ACSII" or "upload ASCII" whichever option your terminal program has. I've done this using both Stalker and Freeze Dried Terminal and also with various other terminal programs on other computers that I have used.

I find that the editor on CompuServe, and other on-line services, is a pain to use. I generally also upload a reply to a message just to stay away from the online editor."

Danny Williams asks for info on creating video titles:

"I wish to use a 520 STE for producing video titles,can anyone tell me what equipment I need (ie a genlock I assume),what software is available and how the set up would work."

Albert Dayes tells Danny:

"The only gen-lock I recall is the one designed for the Atari Mega ST. I believe it used the mega bus on the Mega ST. There maybe others that attached to 3rd party video cards but that is the only one I remember."

Tom Harker of ICD (Incredibly Cool Devices) posts:

"We are just about finished with our new version 7.x.x of ICD SCSI Pro Software and looking for serious beta testers.

Please respond by EMAIL. Include name, address, phones, equipment, etc."

Joe Roborecky tells Tom:

"I'm looking foward to version 7.x.x of ICD's software. I use 6.5.5 Pro now.

What features will be in 7.x.x?"

Tom replies:

[We] "Fixed a few minor bugs, added XHDI 1.2 compliancy, and a couple of utilities."

Stephen Wilson asks:

"Can anyone give me a rough idea of how much my trusty Supra 30Meg HD is worth on the s/h market? I know it's probably going to be a pretty insignificant proportion of the \$loads I paid for it - but (hey) - easy come, . . . :)

I won't tell you what I've been offered, suffice it to say that I'd probably choose to keep it as a novelty paper weight instead. I'm in the UK (if that's relevant).

PS: can I advertise gear here?"

John at Missionware Software tells Stephen:

"I recently sold my Supra 30 megger for US \$25. I'm not sure what that translates to in pounds at the moment. I doubt you'll get much more than that for it."

Sysop Bob Retelle tells Stephen:

"I really can't say what your drive would be worth today... but as you mentioned, in these days of gigabyte hard drives, a 30 Mb drive probably isn't going to be worth very much.

It's mostly a matter of what someone who needs one is willing to pay, and how much you're willing to accept for it.

By the way, yes... it's fine to post an individual, non-commercial ad to sell Atari related stuffff here..!

(I won't even begin to calculate how many gigabytes of hard drive storage I could buy today for the same cost as my original Atari 810 floppy disk drive..! <smile>

Well folks, I told you it was going to be a short one this week. That's it for now. Remember to listen to what they are saying when...

PEOPLE ARE TALKING

EDITORIAL QUICKIES

"A man went to a lawyer for a defense after he had been caught embezzling millions from his employer.

He was concerned about going to jail, but was told by the attorney, "Don't worry

- you'll never go to jail with all that money."

The lawyer was right. When the man went to prison, he didn't have a dime!"

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